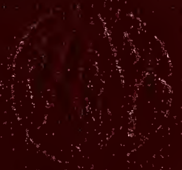

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ECONOMICS OF HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION

BY

MARGARET G. REID

Iowa State College

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PREFACE

The household is our most important economic institution. Yet economics of household production is a neglected field of study. With few exceptions the interest of economists has been concentrated on that part of our economic system which is organized on a price basis.[1] The productive work of the household has been overlooked, even though more workers are engaged in it than in any other single industry.

The household is an integral part of our whole economic system. Only if it is viewed in this way can we become aware of the labor costs and productive activities necessary to maintain present standards of living. Unless this is done we cannot rightly appraise the economic rôle of homekeeping women or act intelligently in matters concerning the gainful employment of married women. Nor can we understand home problems and formulate satisfactory curricula of education for home and family life.

The major portion of this book is devoted to a description and analysis of the present status of household production, and the important economic problems of the household manager. The effect of household production on the position of women and the social life of the family is examined in detail. Finally we look to the future to ask not only what is likely to happen but also what should be done to direct or control the changes which are taking place. Throughout the whole study an attempt is made to reveal problems and the situations out of which they arise rather than provide rules of action for the household manager.

Every topic dealt with has been approached with three questions in mind: (1) What are the facts? (2) In what way are they important to families and to society as a whole? And (3) what should be done about them? During recent years, research in various fields has contributed greatly to our knowledge of the

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[1] One notable exception is a recently published book, *Economic Problems of the Family,* by Dr. Hazel Kyrk.

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household status and problems. As far as possible, this research has been coordinated and analyzed. While the book contains much factual information the emphasis has been placed on interpretation and understanding.

The problems discussed are of deepest personal interest to those homemakers who seek to analyze their economic problems and to understand their economic function in society. This book is, however, frankly planned as a textbook. As such it will be of interest to teachers of economics and sociology, especially those concerned with family economics, standards of living, and family relationships. It will also be of interest to teachers of home economics, particularly those in the fields of education and home management. For several years this book has been used as a text in a course in economics of the household at Iowa State College. The questions and selected bibliography appended were used also to develop class discussion among both undergraduate and graduate students.

The author wishes to acknowledge her indebtedness to numerous friends and students for many suggestions and much friendly and helpful criticism. She wishes especially to express her appreciation of the constructive criticism given by Dr. Hazel Kyrk at the University of Chicago, under whose guidance the study was commenced; and to Dr. Elizabeth E. Hoyt, Iowa State College, whose sympathetic appreciation of household problems greatly enriched many of the topics discussed. Professor Mary K. Heiner of the University of Chicago contributed many suggestions and interesting examples which are incorporated in the text. Miss Maud Wilson of the Oregon Agricultural College and Dr. Hildegarde Kneeland of the Bureau of Home Economics, Washington, D. C., kindly made available unpublished data concerning time spent in homemaking. Dr. Jessie Coles of the University of Missouri read and gave valuable suggestions concerning Chapter XVII.

MARGARET G. REID

March 29th, 1934,
Ames, Iowa.

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PART I

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

WHAT IS HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION?

In 1930 there were in the United States 27,500,000 families with two or more members. In most of these homes, household production was part and parcel of the daily round of activities. We are familiar with household production as with many other commonplace things, yet really know very little about it. Few people appreciate its importance. Nor do they realize the part it plays in providing them with the goods which they enjoy.

This neglect of household production is partly due to the fact that we tend to be especially blind to things which are close at hand. But perhaps it is due even more to the fact that the household is not a money-making institution. The more we have concentrated on money values the more we have overlooked that part of our economic system which is not organized on a profit basis.

Production is the process of making goods available for use. The household plays a part. Let us see what this part is. What activities carried on by the household or family group are a part of this process? That is, what activities contribute or aid in providing economic goods for the family members?

When we turn to books about the household we find mention of household production. But there seems to be a good deal of difference of opinion as to what it actually is. According to some, household production is almost, or altogether, a thing of the past. Richards, commenting on the changed household, says: "The home has ceased to be the glowing centre of production from which radiate all desirable goods, and has become but a pool toward which products made in other places flow—a place of *consumption* not of *production*."[1] A common conception is expressed by Burns: "In modern industrial countries women are generally consumers, and men are generally producers."[2] Others consider that while certain household duties are productive others are not, a division sometimes being made between those calling for manual labor, and those having to do with the direction of the household as a consuming unit. Andrews, for example, considers that "The work of the household includes: (1) the productive activities of food preparation, care of the house, furnishings, and clothing, nurture of children, care of the sick, etc., and (2) the direction of the household as the consumption-group."[3] Leeds looks upon purchasing as an act of production.[4]

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[1] *The Cost of Living*, 3rd ed. (1915), p. 25.

Many questions thus arise. Is production concerned merely with making material goods? If not, what else is included? Is the housewife really more of a consumer than the other members of the family? What then is the distinction between production and consumption? Is the direction of the household which makes possible satisfactory living conditions a productive activity? A satisfactory definition of household production will provide an answer to these questions.

PAID ACTIVITIES NOT INCLUDED

The household consists of a group of people living under a common roof. The production this group carries on for its own members might well be looked upon as household production. Thus defined it may include both paid and unpaid activities. Paid workers are members of many households, that is, they share a common habitation. There are several reasons, however, why it seems advisable to limit household production to the unpaid activities of the family or household members. In this way attention is concentrated on those productive activities hitherto neglected. Moreover, paid activities even if included would constitute a very small part of household production.

It simplifies our discussion to include only unpaid activities. But there are other reasons why this exclusion is best. Let us examine the paid activities carried on by and for household members to see why this is so. Not infrequently we find lodgers or servants living with the family as members of the household. Lodgers pay family members for services rendered; and servants are paid by the family for services performed.

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[2] *Industry and Civilization* (1925), p. 202.

[3] *Economics of the Household* (1923), p. 393.

[4] *The Household Budget* (1917), p. 12.

There is very good reason for excluding the work of servants from household production. The services and economic relationship of a servant to the family may be much the same whether he lives in or lives out. If a servant does not live in, his labor can be considered household production only because it is carried on in the house. But if one paid worker carrying on production at or in the house is considered to be a household producer, it is logical to assume that all such workers should be. Accordingly the builder, the plumber, the house decorator, the doctor in so far as he comes to the house, the social secretary, and a whole host of other workers who at some time or other carry on their specialized work in a home would be household producers. So it seems wise to consider that once the work passes into the hands of those who are paid for it, whether or not at the same time it passes from the house, it should not be looked upon as household production.

But what about service to lodgers by family members? Is such labor a part of household production? It bears a close resemblance to any production carried on by the members of the household for pay or sale in the market. If it is included in household production one might argue that other paid work should be included if carried on by the family members at home. The woman working at home who takes in washing, who has home cooking for sale, or fills orders for Italian embroidery or china painting, or makes shirts, buttonholes, or artificial flowers from materials provided from a factory would be carrying on household production. If we included paid work as household production a novelist working at home would then be a household producer. So all in all it seems best to confine the definition of household production to unpaid activities.

Some people may wonder if we are always justified in classing as unpaid all the work carried on by and for the members of the family. They may feel that a commercial relationship exists even within the primary family group. Some may look upon the wife's allowance as a money payment for the services rendered.

But even where the allowance is a personal and not a household allowance, such is seldom a correct concept. The allowance is not estimated on the basis of what the services are worth, or on the basis of what such services would bring on the market. The amount usually bears no reference to the quantity or the quality of the work, but depends upon the economic status of the family. Often the highest allowances go to those who do the least work. An allowance whether household or personal is usually a matter of convenient division of resources. The wife is given her share as a member of the group, or that portion of the family income for which she assumes responsibility.

In many families also certain of the older children and the adult members of the group make definite money contributions to the household. These may be looked upon as payment for board and lodging. The amount contributed is determined at times by the current prices for such services. This is the nearest approach to a buying and selling arrangement in the family. It is usually, however, something more than a strictly economic contract. The payment made may be considered the just contribution which a particular member should make to the maintenance of the household. The amount contributed by the member frequently bears a close relationship to his ability to pay. The various members may not pay equally even though goods provided are the same. Furthermore, failure to pay does not bring suspension of goods. Some signs of a commercial relationship are often present, yet the social relationship of the members, their common interest in the household life usually differentiate the family group from the non-private household with its formal contract basis. Members of the private family living as a household in strictly economic relationship, paying for services rendered because of their market valuation, would be an exception to the more general communistic household.

PRODUCTION ACTIVITIES CAN BE DELEGATED

Household production can now be defined as the unpaid activities carried on by and for the members of the family. When we begin to examine the unpaid activities, however, we find that there are several kinds. In family and household life, production, consumption, and those social activities having to do with personal relationships are all intermingled. In this medley of unpaid activities, which are production?

The definition of production has had a varied career. At first a producer was looked upon as one who labored upon a material good, changing its form in some way. The farmer and the manufacturer were thus producers, but not the teacher or the storekeeper. Much of our present confusion dates back to this idea. News items in the daily paper about the "producer" refer to farmers, miners, manufacturers, even though these carry on only a limited part of the productive process as it is now defined. When someone claims that production is no longer carried on in the home he means that such tasks as gardening, butter making, spinning, and sewing are gone.

The concept of production is now much broader. It is now commonly defined as the creation of utility; and utility is the want-satisfying power of a good. The goods which are produced may be material or non-material. They may be commodities such as cakes or dresses, or services such as teaching or supervising children. The concept of production becomes clearer if we examine the different kinds of utilities which are created. Material goods are made available for our use through the creation of form, place, time, and possession utility. Growing corn, making bread, and varnishing furniture are examples of activities creating form utility. Railways create place utility. Storing goods until they are desired gives them time utility. People busy with buying and selling create possession utility. Thus we see that there is a whole host of producers who in no way alter the form of a good.

A producer is one who shares in making goods available. A word of warning is perhaps necessary here. A good in the sense in which it is used here is not necessarily something which contributes to our welfare. Productive activities may cater to frivolous needs or even provide goods which are harmful. A friend of mine once insisted that icing a cake was not a productive activity. She considered that icings were "unnecessary" and, what is more, "not good for the family." But these facts did not mean that the activity was unproductive. So long as a good created satisfies a want, the activity which provides it is classed as production.

When production is defined as the creation of utility it has one general fault. It is too inclusive. It has been developed and found satisfactory by those discussing paid labor. To define production merely as the creation of utility is to identify it with purposeful activity. All rational acts are expected to increase satisfaction. Production has at times been identified with purposeful action without the implications of such an assumption being recognized. Taussig, for example, writes: "Since the essence of production is that it leads to satisfactions or utilities, it follows that any labor or effort which yields utilities is productive."[5] Let us see where this leads us. Friendship in many cases is the result of purposeful effort and calls for the expenditure of much time and energy. Does such a fact make productive the activity directed to increasing the "stock" of friendship? We shall consider this question later.

In his recent book, *Modern Economic Society,* Slichter writes: "The essential thing is whether something is being done which either directly or indirectly contributes to the satisfaction of human desires. Any activity which produces this effect is productive." Such a definition of production leaves production and consumption in a state of hopeless confusion and makes no distinction between economic, personal, and social activities. A cheery "good morning," a swim in the lake, a game of golf, and social intercourse at the family table are production along with the cultivation of the soil, the making of shoes, the care of the sick, and the teaching of children.

In separating production and consumption perhaps the first thing which needs to be made clear is that consumption activities are personal. They are activities which the individual carries on to meet his own needs. No person can consume for another. Accordingly, the housewife is not necessarily any more important as a consumer than any other member of the family. But not all activities carried on by the individual to meet his own needs are consumption. Black considers: "The distinction between production and consumption is easy enough to make in ordinary cases." He says: "Eating, drinking, sleeping, listening to music, playing golf for sport are obvious forms of consumption. So also are dancing (not stage dancing), reading fiction, and pleasure riding. Living in a house is consuming it."[6] He classes as consumption all those activities in which an individual is himself satisfying an immediate personal want. Consumption is thus recognized by the attitude which the person might have toward the activity, play versus work, or by what the activity probably does to the person.

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[5] *Principles of Economics,* 3rd ed. (1921), Vol. 1, p. 18.

It is extremely difficult to determine the extent to which consumer activities, that is, the activities carried on by a person to meet his own needs, have to do with immediate needs and momentary satisfaction only; or whether they, wholly or in part, go to bring about a change in himself in order to satisfy later needs. Golf, dancing, reading fiction, for example, or even sleeping and eating, have to do with more than immediate and personal satisfactions. For the purpose of argument it might be assumed that want-satisfying power has been built up in each of the activities cited. They lead to later satisfaction as well as immediate. Reading fiction may build up more want-satisfying power than could possibly have been built up in the same period of time spent in listening to a very serious lecture, or in reading a "dry as dust" volume. And who is to say that golf does not or is not intended to build up potential want-satisfying power, and that physical culture does? Some people take up golf in order to reduce their waist lines and "keep fit," and others to get acquainted with the "right people." Furthermore, is the child because he eats his cereal in order to grow up "big and strong," or the adult because he includes spinach and bran in his diet in order to improve his health, to be looked upon as a producer? The possibility of later satisfactions alone explains such activities.

Another way of distinguishing between production and consumption is suggested here. Both production and consumption are involved in the life history of a good. Where does production leave off and consumption commence? Production has at times been looked upon as a means to an end, and consumption as an end in itself. But practically no activity, not even the mastication of food, is an end in itself, so this distinction is not particularly helpful. Consumption might better be defined as those activities associated with the use of a good, or so intimately related to its use that they must be performed by the consumer. *If the utility is derived only through the "doing," or by the participation of the one who uses the good, then the activity is consumption.* Accordingly such activities as playing the piano as a means of self-expression, or swimming to satisfy one's desire for activity, would not be production. But if, for example, the consumer desires music, no matter how produced, his efforts in playing the piano may assume a productive aspect. This seems to be in accord with a distinction made by Cassel. He states:

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[6] *Production Organization* (1929), p. 25.

> The act of satisfying needs is not itself to be regarded as an economic activity. The satisfaction of a need as such generally means a certain more or less active preoccupation on the part of the person who satisfies his needs. The man who wishes to satisfy his hunger must eat: the man who seeks the recreation of a walk must use his legs: the man who desires to provide his own music must play or sing. Activities of this kind do not come within the economic sphere.[7]

That is, if the person to satisfy his own need must carry on the activity, that activity is consumption, not production. This distinction between production and consumption does not put activities into hard and fast categories. Even though clearly defined lines cannot be drawn, it does provide a basis for logical thinking in regard to the various activities.

Now that the difference between production and consumption, as the terms are to be used here, has been made clear, a satisfactory means of distinguishing between economic and social activities must be sought. Black in describing service production writes: "The individual is either trying to *satisfy somebody else's immediate wants*—as, for example, by singing to him or transporting him; or is causing some change in himself or in other persons that is intended to result in satisfying his wants or their wants or other persons' wants *later*."[8] This definition classifies as production many activities of a purely social nature. It is true that some of the deepest, most fundamental, and lasting satisfactions arise from our associations with people. Many individuals probably spend considerable effort in working out for themselves and others satisfactory social relationships in the groups to which they belong. Such activities may contribute to the immediate satisfaction of one's self and others, and to later satisfactions as well. Does this mean that activities having to do with one's personal life should be considered as production? To some extent activities having to do with personal relationships have been commercialized: by lawyers, ministers, and psychiatrists, for example. But what about the activities which make living together a source of pleasure and satisfaction? It seems that production is something apart from activities having to do with purely personal relationships. An activity is considered personal if it must be performed by a particular person not because of special ability but because of a personal relationship between the performer and the one whose want is satisfied. The relationships of husband and wife, of brother and sister, and of friends call for certain activities and result in satisfactions that do not arise from the performance alone but from the fact that the service is rendered by a particular person.

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[7] Gustav Cassel, *Theory of Social Economy* (1924), p. 5.

[8] J. D. Black, *Production Organization*, p. 25.

The foregoing discussion suggests the test which may be applied in order to separate production from consumption and social activities: *If an activity is of such character that it might be delegated to a paid worker, then that activity shall be deemed productive.*

We are now prepared to complete our definition of household production. It consists of those *unpaid activities which are carried on, by and for the members, which activities might be replaced by market goods, or paid services, if circumstances such as income, market conditions, and personal inclinations permit the service being delegated to someone outside the household group.*

ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION

It is clear at once that household production includes the provision of both material and non-material goods. In the case of material goods the production may consist in giving the goods either the form, time, place, or possession utility desired. Nonmaterial goods consist of services which might have been performed by a paid worker. Household production is thus comprised of those activities which provide goods contributing to the manner of living desired, yet it does not include activities having to do with the purely personal life of the group. Within the household group there are activities due primarily to the relationship of husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister. There are elements of companionship, counsel, and training which exist solely because of personal relationship. Thus household members contribute goods plus certain associations, companionship, sympathy, and interest. These presumably increase the satisfactions derived from the goods provided but are not a part of the economic contribution.

On stopping to think about family life one is impressed by the extent to which personal associations are intermingled with the productive activities. In fact it often is difficult to separate one from the other. Certain distinctions can, however, be made. Watson, for example, considers that the home has a three-fold function: (1) the racial or biologic; (2) the working out of the social relationships of the family group; and (3) the economic. The last she describes as "the satisfaction of those daily needs which do not necessarily depend on personal relations, but which can be met by anyone skilled and trained sufficiently to understand and meet the demands of the situation."[9] It is the last only which is household production. The activities related to the second function, namely, the working out of the social relationships of those who make up the family group, are, in most instances, closely linked with the productive activities carried on; yet the difference becomes apparent when one considers whether or not the activity can be delegated. Watson considers that there is "no clear line of demarcation between the social living in the home and the industrial aspects of homemaking."

Considerable difference of opinion may exist as to which activities and duties are so bound up with the personal life of the family that they cannot be delegated to outsiders. Families having a large money income with which to pay for services and goods provide considerable evidence of tasks which may be delegated. By examining their household life we can discover the nature and extent of the production carried on by low-income families.

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[9] "Employer-Employee Relationship in the Home," *Annals Am. Acad.*, CXLIII (1929, May), 50.

Some of the productive activities of the household are apparent from the foregoing discussion. The household crafts requiring manual labor and resulting in the creation of form utility are readily accepted as being included. But what of certain management activities? As manager, as "director of consumption," as a buyer in the retail market, is the housewife a producer? Furthermore, are the woman's activities as companion, counsellor, or as community representative of the family a part of household production?

Management is important for satisfactory group life. But can it be delegated? There is evidence that much of it can. Production commences with certain aims and purposes stated. The formulation and expression of the basic standards of the members of the group, in regard to the kind of household life and goods to be provided, are not producer but consumer activities since these cannot be delegated. The presence in many homes of a paid housekeeper who assumes much responsibility for management is evidence, however, of the impersonal character of much of the management.

Choice-making is a part of management. A paid worker with an intimate knowledge of the wishes of the group might assume responsibility for choosing most of the goods, especially the food for the family, clothes for the children, certain house furnishings and equipment. The possibility of delegating a large portion of choice-making is shown by the fact that one member frequently assumes a major responsibility for selecting goods for other members. The details of budget-making, the keeping of household accounts, and like activities associated with efficient household administration are tasks which could be carried on by a paid worker. All of these might be delegated to someone apart from the family group, even though the circumstances in which most families find themselves do not make this possible.

The purchasing of goods is closely related to choice-making. It is something more, however. It involves finding and procuring the goods which choice has decreed are desired. It is this part of the housewife's job which has led to her being described as "the consumer." But the woman in marketing renders the same service as the retailer or wholesaler. She gives goods time, place, and possession utility. Money income will in itself satisfy few wants; goods in the retail store are not yet available for use. By converting money income into real income utility is created. Moreover, this marketing activity can be delegated. One member can do it for another. Professional shopping service is also available in many large stores. The shopper, on being informed of the character of the good desired, searches for and selects from the goods on the market the good or goods which seem most appropriate. The person desiring the good has only to decide whether or not the shopper's selection has been satisfactory to her. Only that buying which involves a special element of choice on the market must be performed by the person desiring the good. So on the whole it may be said that the selection of market goods for the use of members of a household is household production.

A special part of the homemaker's job is child care and training. Some consider that these tasks are a part of the mother's responsibility. Although parents have a responsibility in regard to food, shelter, clothing, and training, it is not absolutely necessary, however, that these goods be produced by them. The child can be provided for in other and, in some cases, even more satisfactory ways. That much of child care and training can be delegated is made clear by the presence of nursemaids, nursery schools, and kindergartens. These are not considered usurpers of parental duties. The personal relationship of the parent and child is, however, something which cannot be delegated. The mother may at times feel that by performing certain tasks, which might be delegated, she is establishing a relationship with her child which is very valuable to her as a mother and to the child as her son or daughter. But the fact that she uses certain tasks as the medium of her contact and does not care to delegate them because they are useful in this way does not mean that they should not be considered productive activities.

Certain aspects of family life deserve our attention. In companionship a reciprocal relationship usually exists. At times, however, the demand made on the woman to contribute to the social life of the household is greater than the demand made on the man. The woman's contribution to the social life of the group is most conspicuous where many tasks have been delegated to paid workers. Conditions occur when the majority of household tasks performed by the wife could readily be delegated to a paid worker, and the wife freed for regular gainful employment. But if the wife became a gainful worker social relationships among the members might be less harmonious. Her presence in the home may have been desired by her husband apart from the tasks performed. The husband may feel cheated of his "rights" if he comes home to a tired wife, one who like himself is weary from the daily grind of office work. If such is the case does the leisure time of the woman during the day assume a productive aspect in view of the contribution made to the recreational needs of one or more of the members?

The special demands of a social nature frequently made on the woman have been commented on by Veblen. He says: "The middle-class wife still carries on the business of vicarious leisure, for the good name of the household and its master."[10] Can we say because of this that the idleness and conspicuous display of wealth which may entail the time of one or more members of the family, and which contribute to the satisfactions of the other members, are to be classed as production? It would appear that these are so linked with the person on whom the demands are made that they cannot be looked upon as an activity which could be delegated. Hence they are not considered productive. In some cases the woman assumes a definite responsibility for representing the family in church and other community activities. It may be considered that the respectability of the family depends on her doing so. Yet since such a duty can be performed only by a member, it cannot be looked upon as household production.

By including in household production only those activities which might be delegated to a paid worker no ethical connotation is inferred; the social relations and activities of the family are of the greatest importance to human satisfaction and social well-being. The distinction between the two groups of activities is made for the express purpose of becoming more aware of the nature and extent of the economic contribution made by the members of a household for their own use. It is made for the purpose of seeing the process of production which provides us with our livelihood, apart from our living, which is made up of personal relationships and consumption activities. In these as in production we may be doing things to secure present and future benefits to ourselves and others.

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[10] *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1922), p. 80.

From now on, however, our interest lies in the changes which household production has undergone, the present status and characteristics of household production, the problems of the individual household, its social aspects, and the future of household production.

Part II

HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION IN THE PAST

CHAPTER II

SOME HOUSEHOLDS IN THE PAST

Change, constant change, is everywhere about us. Present families can remember when the production carried on by the family group was very different from what it is now. Consequently we do not have to study earlier societies in order to realize that the household is a dynamic not a static institution. Yet we cannot fully understand the present household unless we know what has gone before. All social institutions change rather slowly. What we have now exists largely because of what has been. Many customs and traditions, for example, those pertaining to standards of living and the rôle of women in society, influence household tasks and are a direct heritage from the past. Certain rather perplexing questions of the present day have their origin here.

A study of the past has other values for us. When we trace the evolution of the household, the modifications which have occurred from time to time, we become aware of the forces which make for change. We see that the household is an integral part of the whole economic system, and that it is affected by all major changes. Understanding the factors which make for change leads us to anticipate, to prepare for and, perhaps, even to direct the course of future changes.

One further value of a historical view should be mentioned. Household production is commonplace. As a result it is difficult to appraise its importance or to see clearly its place in the whole economic system. Moreover, it is bound up with family life. As a result, prejudices and biases concerning it are common. Some people are prone to say "What has been should be," thus failing to recognize the need for changes in the household in accord with other economic changes. Other people may be in too great a hurry to press on to the new. By examining the households of people distant in time and place we can, by contrast, see that about us more clearly, more objectively, and with less emotion.

Economic histories of various kinds abound. There are histories of agriculture, manufacturing, banking, corporations, and many others. Yet we have no history of the household. Perhaps some day such a history will be written revealing fully the part played by this basic economic institution. We are going to examine here only the outstanding features of certain representative societies.

Four societies have been chosen. It has frequently been assumed that a household economy existed among primitive peoples and in certain other societies. For this reason the status of households in preliterate or primitive societies will be examined. Rome has been selected as an example of early civilizations. The English manor in the Middle Ages and the household in colonial America are believed to be of special interest since our present-day household has evolved from these.

When we come to examine the household production of different peoples, a few very important questions stand out. If these can be answered a fairly clear picture of household production emerges. These questions are: (1) Did the small marriage group of husband, wife, and unmarried children maintain a separate home? Or did the household group include as well grandparents, and married sons and daughters? Or did large communities live together under a single roof, having food prepared in common? (2) To what extent was the small family or household self-sufficing? (3) What production did this family carry on to meet its own needs? (4) Where the family was not entirely self-sufficing what goods were produced by specialization and co-operation outside the household? (5) Which members shared most in household production? (6) How can the household production which was carried on be explained? Why was there not more?

The answers to these questions are not easy to find. Household production has always been private, commonplace, small scale, and not easily observed. Economic history is our chief available source of information. This is true in spite of the fact that economic historians have paid little attention to the household. They have been interested chiefly in the development of institutions having to do with the exchange of goods. Although they neglected the story of household production yet it is implicit in the record of the industrial life of groups. Household production is a part of the process of making goods available. When the character of the livelihood and of the economic organization in general is known, deductions may be made about household production. If no special organization existed for providing the goods commonly used, we may safely assume that most of these were produced by the family. Organized exchange of goods and the presence of specialized workers are likely to be observed and commented upon.

It is rather fun to scan a history or other book describing a civilization. It may not presume to tell much, if anything, about the household. Yet when you study the pictures and read between the lines you discover in the description of goods, tools, transportation, trade, city life, and other things, a fairly adequate picture of what the household must have done. In fact, a good general picture of household production can be secured only by becoming familiar with the economic system as a whole, and by perceiving the functions of other economic institutions. Detailed records of the activities of individual households must be interpreted with care. They are seldom representative of more than a limited group and are thus apt to give a distorted picture.

A study of economic history is helpful in another way. It describes a changing economic order. The forces modifying the general economic organization are identical with those bringing changes in the economic status of the household. Descriptions of social institutions and customs also reveal to some extent the economic contribution of the family. These indicate the economic organization of the group and the nature of the goods used.

HOUSEHOLD ECONOMY AMONG PRIMITIVE PEOPLES

Primitive societies are so different from ours that we turn to an examination of their family production with a great deal of curiosity. Many of the interesting facts, however, are missing. People who have gone to the South Sea Islands, or among the

Eskimo in the north, or to study the American Indian on the plains or in the desert saw, in many cases, the obvious things like the tools used and the clothes worn, and failed to see the less apparent things such as division of labor, specialization, and barter.

Moreover, in many primitive societies the family or household unit is not so separate and distinct as it is in our society. Several writers have commented on this. Bücher makes no distinction between the household, the family, and the clan. Many people look upon the large kinship group, at times claiming relationship through some distant ancestor, as a single household or family.[1] In many cases the community works together, or owns things in common. Land, for example, is almost always held in common. Very large groups may share a common dwelling. Even though communities own things in common and appear to be working and living as one group, smaller groupings appear. These small groups have separate houses or if living in a common dwelling they have separate fires. Certain goods are private property, and many of the final processes of production, such as cooking, are carried on by the members of the small group for their own use. Rivers, a well-known anthropologist, says: "I do not know of any example in which the group I call a kindred live together in one household, at any rate, as a systematic institution."[2] It is these smaller groups that are comparable to our households.

Early studies of primitive people on the whole show a very simple economic organization in which the household is almost or entirely self-sufficing. Brown's description of the Andamanese is a good example. These people live in village communities on a small island just off the coast of India. Each family has a separate hut which is erected and kept in repair by the family.

> A man hunts and fishes . . . he makes his own bows and arrows, his adze and knife, cuts canoes and makes rope for harpoon lines. A woman collects fruits and digs up roots . . . she catches prawns and crabs and small fish with her small fishing net; she provides the firewood and the water for the

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[1] *Industrial Evolution,* p. 89. R. Firth, in *Primitive Economics of the New Zealand Maori,* discusses the views of various writers concerning household economy as a stage in economic development (pp. 5-29).

[2] W. H. R. Rivers, *Social Organization,* (1924), p. 16.

> family and does the cooking, she makes all such objects as baskets, nets of thread, and personal ornaments either for herself or her husband. . . . The fish that a man shoots belong to him, and to a woman belong the roots she digs up, the seeds that she collects, the fish or prawns that she takes in her nets or the mollusca that she brings from the reefs. . . . The family meal is prepared at the fire that each family has in its hut. The meal is a family one, partaken by a man, his wife and children.[3]

Only in canoe building and in some types of hunting did Brown find community co-operation.

Grierson studied many groups of primitive peoples. He concluded that the household was the principal productive unit:

> Among the Fuegians, for example, she [the woman] gathers mussels and catches fish, and, in addition, attends to her children, makes baskets, fishing-lines, and necklaces, and paddles her lord's canoe. So necessary, indeed, is her help to the unmarried Yahgan, who has no near relative, that he is forced to join someone more powerful than himself, who, in return for his work, will protect him and permit his wives to fish for him.[4]

Later studies have tended to dissipate the notion that family groups ever acted so independently. Malinowski, undoubtedly the most outstanding authority on primitive economics, writes:

> In spite of repeated theoretical assertions as to the existence of the "closed household economy" or even of individual search for food among primitive peoples, we find in every community, however simple, a wider economic collaboration embracing all members and welding the various families into larger cooperative units.[5]

It is true that certain elements in primitive cultures suggest that the family group might be almost self-sufficing. The goods and tools are for the most part simple in character. It is often technically possible for a small group to provide itself with the goods used. It seems to happen, however, that no matter how simple are the goods or the tools used there is a tendency for the household to co-operate with the larger group. People everywhere seem to have discovered that increased efficiency results from co-operation and specialization. In addition to this, social intercourse has an integrating effect on the economic life of the group. People tend to work together because they live in the same community. Firth concludes: "The economic organization of any community is very closely bound up with the social structure in such manner that one serves to reinforce the other."[6]

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[3] A. R. Brown, *The Andaman Islanders,* pp. 38-44.

[4] P. J. H. Grierson, *The Silent Trade* (1903), pp. 7-8.

[5] *Encyclopædia Britannica,* article "Marriage," Vol. 14 (1929), p. 943.

Stories of primitive people describe extensive co-operation. Agriculture among many American Indian tribes is largely a community affair, in some cases, under the direction of the women. At seed time and harvest the whole village may turn out to help. Buffalo hunts were undertaken by tribes, not smaller groups acting independently. The spoils of the field, chase, or a capture are often divided on the basis of custom and tradition. They do not necessarily go to the families of those who did the work. Where dwellings are more elaborate than simple huts of grass or skins the community shares in the building. In many cases also the chief has claims on the labor of the people. Clan and village ceremonials call for a great deal of co-operation, each member of the tribe having a customary task to perform.

Division of labor as well as co-operation occurs. Among some groups Goldenweiser found agriculturalists and herdsmen so specialized that they formed distinct social classes. Among certain tribes there were specialized salt makers, ironsmiths, silversmiths, and merchants.[7] Among the Maori, makers of stone adzes, wood-carvers, house and canoe builders, and above all tattooers devoted the major portion of their time to special crafts. Where there are specialists a system exists for the exchange of goods and services. Long before money was freely used, barter was carried on: "You do this for me, I'll do that for you." Thus a tattooer for making a certain design might be entitled to two fish. The more elaborate the design the more produce he received. Parsons found considerable trading among the Pueblo Indians. She writes: "Pottery is made on First Mesa, but not on Second Mesa; those gaily colored plaque baskets of which every Hopi bride must have a store of twelve to distribute with meal to those 'aunts' who helped in her wedding, are made on Second Mesa, not on First."[8] All such specialization denotes production outside the household group.

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[6] *Primitive Economics of the New Zealand Maori,* p. 126.

[7] A. A. Goldenweiser, *Early Civilization* (1922), p. 267.

Widespread hospitality and communal sharing also reveal the dependence of one household group on another. Of the Andaman Islanders, for example, among whom household production seemed so important, Brown relates: "All food is private property and belongs to the man or woman who obtained it. Everyone who has food is expected, however, to give to those who have none."[9] Firth says of the Maori: "Starvation or real want in one family was impossible while others in the village were abundantly supplied with food."[10]

Malinowski gives us an excellent picture of the economic system of the Trobriand Islanders in New Guinea.[11] These people he considers are typical of South Sea Islanders with a general level of culture representative of the majority of primitive races. In no case does a household satisfy the wants of its members. In fact, a very complicated economic system exists. The chief has oversight of the land; others in the group also have oversight rights and duties. After the land is cleared the work is carried on by men and women jointly working in families, each on its own plot without any outside help. Communal labor occurs, however, in fishing and in the building of houses and canoes. Sometimes only a few families, again the whole community or several communities, join together to accomplish a task.

Nor is their system of distribution simple. Each family does not consume the food it raises. The whole community is a network of reciprocal obligations in which everyone is working for everybody else. A man sends half his garden produce to his sisters and another part to various relatives. The remainder goes to his own household. His family in turn is supported by his wife's brother and other relatives. Malinowski states: "Economic obligations of such nature cutting across the closed unity of the household could be quoted for every single tribe of which we have adequate information."[12]

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[8] E. W. Parsons, "A Pueblo Indian Journal," *Memoirs of the American Anthropological Association, No. 32* (1925), p. 18.

[9] A. R. Brown, *The Andaman Islanders*, p. 43.

[10] *Op. cit.*, p. 280. See also, F. Müller-Lyer, *The History of Social Development*, p. 156; P. J. H. Grierson, *The Silent Trade*, p. 17.

[11] B. Malinowski, "The Primitive Economics of the Trobriand Islanders," *Economic J.*, XXXI (1921, March), 1-16.

Even where much co-operation in tasks occurs and the goods produced by the family are distributed to others, certain types of production seem to have been frequently carried on by and for family members. Among these are the care of children, the final preparation of food, the curing of skins, spinning, weaving of rugs and blankets, the fashioning and embroidering of garments, the weaving of baskets and plaques, the molding of earthenware jars, the making and repair of weapons, the care of the dwelling, and in many cases its erection. These were, and still are, the common household tasks. Yet every one of these among some primitive tribe is partly or wholly carried on by a specialized worker or through community co-operation. In the family production carried on, the woman is usually the chief worker. Men tend to share more than women in group enterprise, they being responsible for the tasks lying farthest from the home center. The woman's work is closely linked with activities centering about the place of abode. She may, however, co-operate with women of other households. This was commonly the case with agriculture. Or she may specialize to some extent in pottery, basketry, weaving, or some other handicraft requiring skill. She then exchanges her products for other goods.

A general survey of the economic system of primitive peoples points to the tribe and not the household as the self-sufficing unit. Much communal production occurs, and a complicated system of distribution frequently cuts across household lines. Private rights in consumer's goods seem in many cases to be only vaguely defined. The household production carried on seems more largely the work of women than men although men share in it.

THE PLACE OF THE HOUSEHOLD IN ROMAN SOCIETY

What was typical in one period of Roman history and for one group cannot be looked upon as representative of the whole. In the beginning Rome was a simple agricultural state. In time cities grew, roads and ships were built, and a network of trade relations was established. A great difference also existed between various households in the same community. One must think of the rich and the poor, as well as rural and urban households.

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[12] *Ency. Brit.*, Vol. 14 (1929), p. 943.

As one turns the pages of a Roman history, be it economic, social, or political, a number of facts stand out which throw light on the status of household production. City life, with its separation of a large part of the people from the soil and their obvious dependence on others for raw materials, is a conspicuous fact. In addition, the tenement character of many of the city dwellings leads one to assume that, for families thus housed, little direct production was possible. The diversity and the quality of the goods used, the food, clothing, tools, entertainment, and perhaps most of all, the difficulty of constructing the houses and public buildings, point to the use of highly skilled labor, and to extensive specialization and co-operation even beyond the scope of the large slave "households" which existed during certain periods of Roman history. Special industries developed. Numerous shops existed for the baking and sale of bread, the cleansing of garments, and other comparatively simple tasks.

The dependence of city households is very obvious. Urban families, however, represented but a small proportion of the population. Society was predominantly rural. Our knowledge of life in rural communities is limited. Descriptions of it are rather scanty. Nevertheless as one reads the story of the Roman people it is apparent that the economic fortunes of the country around Rome were largely tied up with those of the city of Rome. The prosperity of the rural communities depended on the city and on the trade relations of Rome with other countries.

During the early history of Rome farms were relatively self-sufficing. Farm households then raised goods largely for their own use and sold the surplus. Yet at least as early as the second century B.C. the capitalistic system of agriculture was already established in certain parts. Families had come to depend more and more on the market; and products intended for the market were grown on a large scale.

The Roman household of which we probably hear the most is the great household with hundreds and even thousands of slaves.

Many of these households were on large farm estates. What about them? Were they largely self-sufficing? Or were they producing mainly for the market?

When the city of Pompeii was covered by a volcanic eruption in the first century A.D., several farms on its outskirts were also buried deep. Some of these have recently been excavated. Here has been preserved for us a fairly complete picture of the productive activities of a Roman farm. Frank describes a typical plantation two miles from Pompeii. The owner of this farm was a specialist. In the implement room were found hoes, picks, and pruning hooks, but no scythes, hammers, or shears. A small mill and oven on the estate suggested that perhaps enough grain was raised for home use. But there were no spinning wheels or looms for weaving. The farm was doubtless mainly a vineyard. The land would be too valuable for the raising of sheep; so cloth was probably purchased in Pompeii.

Frank describes the various ways in which this great farm household was tied up with the city. He says:

> The house was built by skilled masons, as the fashionable type of reticulate masonry indicates, frescoed by an expert painter from the city, decorated with terra cotta ornaments, and fitted up with standard bathtubs and an elaborate hot-water system that must have required the services of Pompeii's highest priced plumbers. These things are in harmony with the silverware, the artistic bronzes, and the modish furniture. But even the implements of the stockroom are of the standard forms made by skilled artisans, the pottery bears the factory stamp and the bricks bear trademarks known from Pompeii. In fact the landlord had proceeded far beyond the earlier practices of agriculture according to which the householder adapts his system of livelihood to the production of his farm. . . . To him the land was a factory for the production of a special article from the profits of which he could make a living.[13]

In commenting on the slave household where grain was raised and ground in the home mill and baked in the farm oven, where sheep were raised, wool carded, spun, and woven, where buildings were erected and tools fashioned, in fact, where everything necessary was grown and manufactured on the farm, Frank says:

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[13] Tenney Frank, *An Economic History of Rome to the End of the Republic* (1920), pp. 209-11.

> The simple economy of the primitive household may have existed in the mountains of Italy in Cicero's day, but few traces of it can be found. The Roman farmstead was often meant to be "self sufficient," to provide for all its needs and to possess slaves who could perform the technical as well as the ordinary work. When, however, this was the case, the self sufficiency was not a mark of primitive conditions . . . but rather of an elaborate capitalistic economy in which the fastidious landlord could afford to satisfy his every whim.[14]

Many of the large slave establishments had highly specialized and skilled workers producing pottery, metal goods, and textiles for the market.

Rostovtzeff, a contemporary student of Roman life, does not consider that household groups in general can at any time be looked upon as self-sufficing. He says:

> The Roman Empire shows more survivals of house-economy than some modern states of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, both in the management of the large estates by absentee landlords and in the husbandry of the peasants. But it is evident that these features of house-economy were mere survivals. Home production alike in Italy and in the provinces was limited to a certain amount of spinning and weaving. For everything else recourse was had to the market; agricultural and domestic implements, pottery, lamps, toilet articles, jewellery, clothes, and the like, were not produced at home even in the villages. The excavations of poor rural cemeteries prove this up to the hilt.[15]

The writer concludes that: "There was no such thing as the prevalence of house-economy throughout the ancient world in all the stages of its evolution." With the decline and fall of the Roman Empire there was, he considers, a gradual change, "into an almost pure 'house-economy.' "[16]

In contrast with the present American households, many of the Roman households doubtless appear quite self-sufficing. A very large proportion of the population lived on farms. Although there were a few good roads, transportation facilities were relatively undeveloped. Machines were not used. Tools were fairly simple, hence usually within the reach of families for their small-scale production. The families were fairly large, and, with the addition of slaves, households were larger still. Increased specialization within the group was thus possible, and the need of co-operating with others in specially laborious tasks was lessened. Little mention is made of women in gainful occupations. The women probably were for the most part busy producing for their own families, preparing food, spinning, weaving, and doing countless things not now performed in the home. In wealthy city homes, however, household tasks were largely delegated and women were free to enjoy leisure. In many instances the woman was a joint partner with the man in production for the market. To what extent this is true for small shopkeepers and handicraftsmen is hard to discover.

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[14] *Op. cit.*, pp. 214-5.

[15] M. Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* (1926), p. 302.

[16] *Op. cit.*, p. 478.

THE HOUSEHOLD IN THE ENGLISH MANORIAL SYSTEM

During the Middle Ages in Europe cities were unimportant. Most of the people lived on great country estates. In England these were known as manors. During the thirteenth century when the manorial system was important roads were very poor. Most of the manors were isolated. Market goods could be secured only at irregular intervals. Annual fairs were held in principal towns. To these came foreign merchants with silks, jewels, spices, and other luxuries. Weekly or semi-weekly markets were held in the large centers. Only in towns such as London were there regular shops. In a few instances peddlers or chapmen went through the country. But the isolated manor could not depend on such meager irregular trade for goods to meet its daily needs. These must be provided on the manor.

Some manors were more isolated than others. Records of transactions from many of the great feudal estates show that the lord derived great sums of money from the sale of produce. In other cases except for salt, iron, and millstones the manors probably provided everything for themselves.

The lord of the manor was the ruler and virtual owner of the estate. His home, the castle or manorial hall, was the center of activities. On the estate were several different groups, free tenants, villeins, and others. All were more or less under the jurisdiction of the lord and bound by custom to render to him certain payment and services.

Agriculture was the main industry. The land was divided among the different groups. A part was reserved for the lord. The free tenants and villeins were each assigned a certain number of acres. In cultivating the land, sowing the seed, and reaping the harvest there was a great deal of co-operation. The family groups did not, however, act independently. The villeins and other tenants were required to cultivate the lord's demesne or fields two or three days a week; special boon days were also given, for example, during harvest time. Labor might be given for work in the garden, grain field, vineyard, workshop, or for any other purpose. In the workshop daughters of tenants spun yarn, wove cloth, constructed garments, brewed ale, and carried on other tasks. In addition to giving days of labor the tenant made payment in kind. Numerous articles might be required, e.g., grain, cattle, fish, poultry, eggs, honey, ale, wine, firewood, linen and woolen cloth, stockings, shoes.

The group was bound together in other ways. Meadows for grazing and wood for fire and building were common property. The tenants used the lord's mill for grinding their corn and his oven for baking their bread. A fee was paid for these. Often the use of the mill and oven was compulsory; laws at times were passed forbidding the tenants having mills and ovens of their own.

The tenants had not only certain obligations but also certain rights. These indicate the way in which the whole group was bound together. Customs on the manor belonging to Christ Church, Canterbury, provide an interesting example. Workers were paid in the following way:

> When he, the villain, with other customers shall have done cutting the hay on the meadow in Raneholm, they will receive by custom three quarters of wheat for baking bread, and one

> ram of the price of eighteen pence, and one pat of butter, and one piece of cheese of the second sort from the lord's dairy, and salt, and oatmeal for cooking a stew, and all the morning milk from all the cows in the dairy, and for every day a load of hay. He may also take as much grass as he is able to lift on the point of his scythe. And when mown grass is carried away, he has a right to one cart. And he is bound to carry sheaves, and for each service of this kind he will receive one sheaf.[17]

Agriculture, though the main, was not, however, the only occupation. Specialized craftsmen were often important, for example, the blacksmith, carpenter, and cobbler. They, in some cases, had small holdings where they raised a part of their food. For the most part, however, they earned a livelihood by selling their services not only to the lord of the manor, but also to the villeins and others wealthy enough to hire their services. Such families were dependent on others even for much of their food.

An elaborate network of rights and obligations bound the whole group together. Within the group individual households had varying degrees of self-sufficiency. In the manorial household such tasks as food preparation, care of the house, spinning and weaving were carried on by servants who were paid in wages or kind. Salzman, in discussing the duties of the mistress of the house, says:

> To begin with, there was the care of servants, who must be treated fairly, neither too strictly nor too easily; they were not to be allowed to idle, and they were the more likely to work well if their mistress set them a good example and worked with them . . . even in the houses of the upper class the ladies had a knowledge of cookery, and occasionally put their knowledge into practice.
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> Even when they did not go so far as to make the bread, great ladies would make sweetmeats and conserves from fruit, and wines and scented waters from flowers. Also they were skilled in compounding medicines from herbs, which they administered to their households and to their poorer neighbors —the lady of the manor being often the unofficial doctor of the village.[18]

[17] G. G. Coulton, *The Medieval Village* (1926), p. 46.

[18] L. F. Salzman, *English Life in the Middle Ages,* pp. 256-8.

In the households of the freemen, villeins, and cottars, the self-sufficiency of the family seemed to vary greatly. In writing of the cottagers, Lipson says:

> The scanty acres of the cottager were clearly insufficient for his maintenance, while the services due to the lord and the claims of his own tenement could have made only small demands upon his time. Ample leisure remained for eking out his resources by working for hire upon the lord's demesne or upon the holdings of the wealthier villeins. Thus early in economic evolution we apparently get the appearance of a wage-earning class, which was destined eventually to supersede villeinage and become the economic basis of modern industrial society.[19]

The villeins, on the other hand, had larger holdings so were more able to provide the raw materials they needed. They were bound, however, to give services to the lord. They also cooperated with other workers in certain tasks. They moreover produced goods for the market. In fact the villeins were often able to meet their obligations to the lord with money. So it is incorrect to picture any of these households as self-sufficing.

Special mention must be made of women in middle and lower class households. No ladies of leisure were they. In many instances the girls and unmarried women hired out as servants and, in some cases, "the man and wife were both earning wages."[20] Coulton says: "At harvest-time, the whole family must come and work except the wife."[21] But even though the woman stayed at home she, in many cases, produced goods for the market: butter, eggs, poultry, yarn. Many were the hanks of yarn that found their way to the market from the housewife's spindle. Such money was often an important source of income.

From a sermon of this period, we learn of the importance of the housewife. Among other things the good housewife

> ordereth the salt meats, first in the salting and afterwards in the keeping, she cleanseth them and ordereth them:—This here is to sell, and that there is to keep. She seeth to the spinning, and then to the making of linen cloth from the yarn. She

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[19] E. Lipson, *An Introduction to the Economic History of England,* p. 43.

[20] G. G. Coulton, *The Medieval Village,* p. 311.

[21] *Op. cit.,* p. 322.

> selleth the bran, and with the money she buyeth cloth. . . . She provideth the household with all things.[22]

Here the woman is portrayed as a gainful worker as well as one who produces directly for her family. Her position in this respect was much the same as that of the rural housewife of today who sends her surplus butter, eggs, and poultry to the market.

Although the housewife at times shared considerably in co-operation outside the household her major contribution, it seems, lay in direct production. Except for the manorial household, gardening, dairying, caring for poultry, spinning, weaving, garment construction, food preparation, care of the house and children were carried on by women for their families.

Some writers have looked upon the manor as one great household. In some ways it was like a great household. There was a central authority. The productive activities carried on by each worker were based on custom rather than on contract. The group was bound together by traditional rights and obligations which included caring for the needy. But yet the manor was more than one household. It was made up of many. They were not bound by a market as we are but nevertheless they were largely dependent on each other.

HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD

No society is ever entirely static. Change is constant, at times rapid, and again slow. The manor system was largely characteristic of England during the years 1000 to 1400. The importance of the manor declined with the growth of towns, the development of handicrafts, the opening of roads, the expansion of trade. The discovery of America came at the end of the fifteenth century. A little more than a century later colonization in America had begun. Out from towns, and agricultural communities came the people. With their household goods, their tools, their knowledge of handicrafts, the customs and traditions of the home land, and with the hope of bettering their lot, these people set out across the watery wastes to found new homes and establish a new society.

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[22] G. G. Coulton, *A Medieval Garner,* pp. 614-5.

In the new land unbelievable changes occurred even within the lifetime of families. Clark says:

> The colonial period does not stand for a time when industrial conditions in America were uniform. . . . During the 170 years of colonial settlement occurred all the change from the trading station, the fishing settlement, and the frontier post to the conservative seaboard town of old traditions and the thriving countryside already distressed with a surplus population.[23]

Throughout the entire colonial period, and later under frontier conditions, the household, except in cities, was in a large measure self-sufficing. This is, perhaps, the most outstanding impression left after a study of household life during colonial times. One is constantly amazed by the variety and the extent of the goods produced by the family group for itself. But the household even here did not stand alone. One who has built up a picture of a household completely or almost self-sufficing may be surprised at the extent to which the household in rural communities was dependent on others for the goods used.

A general picture of the production carried on by household groups during the colonial period can best be secured by examining the influence of the various factors affecting household production at this time. After that we shall turn to New England, the acknowledged leader in household manufacturing.

Influences affecting household production

Social ideals and institutions play a part in shaping the economic life of a people. Ideals of individual freedom of action and independence were important in colonial times. The wealth of natural resources and land free for the taking further entrenched these ideals. No organization comparable to the manorial system could develop in a country where land was free and social ideals of individual freedom and initiative prevailed. Moreover, the settlers came from a social organization in which the household group was well defined. Private property not community ownership was a well-established institution. Each family was free to, and usually did establish itself independently. The prospect of

[23] Victor S. Clark, *History of Manufactures in the United States, 1807-1880,* p. 2.

future wealth and the high returns from labor were undoubtedly influential in stimulating large families. Large families in turn stimulated pioneering and greater self-sufficiency of the family group.

Economic factors

The farm household was typical of colonial life. In 1790 only 3.3 per cent of the people lived in cities of 8,000 or over. There were only six of these cities, all seaports. Most of the other 96.7 per cent lived on farms or in villages and small hamlets. In these communities the majority of the people tilled the soil and carried on agricultural pursuits. At the close of the eighteenth century, about nine out of every ten gainfully occupied workers were engaged in some form of agriculture during the greater part of the year.[24] Free land was abundant. As a result there was, in many communities, little incentive for handicrafts to develop. The governor of New Hampshire, in 1762, reported this condition to the British government: "The people are by no means inclined to any sort of manufacture. Scarcely a shoemaker, a joiner, or a silversmith but quits his trade, as soon as he can get able to buy a little tract of land and build a cottage in the wilderness."[25]

The land yielded an abundance of raw materials: cereals, meats, vegetables, fruits, wool, skins, and lumber to be used for food, clothing, and furniture. The problem which faced the pioneers was that of securing finished products. With most people engaged in agriculture there were few specialized craftsmen. In many cases settlers could provide themselves with finished goods only by completing the production themselves or by shipping the raw materials to England or other countries in exchange for finished goods. The line of action taken depended on whether farm products could be sold in European markets. The New England colonists, for example, were greatly handicapped in the sale of their farm produce. In some parts of the South the situation was very different. Their principal products—tobacco, rice, and indigo—were eagerly sought by British buyers. As a result of this the people in these parts bought finished goods in Europe. Home industries did not develop as long as people could readily exchange their raw materials for finished goods. Tryon writes: "As early as 1689 traders to Virginia and Maryland asserted that these provinces depended on them wholly for clothing and other necessaries from England."[26]

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[24] *A Century of Population Growth,* p. 26.

[25] V. S. Clark, *History of Manufacturers in the United States,* 1807-1880, p. 207.

Clark points out the relation of home manufacture to foreign markets:

> When foreign markets took freely the primary manufactures of the colonies, other industries declined. When wars, commercial restrictions, or stagnant trade closed to the colonists an over-sea outlet for these productions, they turned their attention to making at home the cloth, utensils, and other wares that in domestic markets took the place of the imported goods for which the people no longer could make returns.[27]

Tryon says of Maryland and Virginia: "During the years when imports were extremely scarce, there developed on the individual plantations considerable activity in the fabrication of cotton, linen, and woolen cloth for clothing, as well as household linens and general supplies."[28] Phillips, in writing of the southern colonists, says: "The planters complained of miscarriages and misfits, of poor quality and high charges, but they got a habit of homespun recourse only when hard times impelled it."[29]

Facilities for transportation played a very important part in determining the status of household production. Tryon considers:

> Conditions in western Virginia and Pennsylvania between 1763 and 1783 furnish an excellent example of home manufacturing being forced upon a people because of their economic isolation. Since these communities had no market for their produce it became necessary for every family to become self-supporting in almost every particular. Hominy blocks and mills were in use in almost every household. The clothing was practically all of household manufacture. Plows, harrows, sleds, cooper-ware, cedar-ware, and the looms were likewise homemade. In fact, almost everything needed in eking out the

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[26] R. M. Tryon, *Household Manufactures,* pp. 70-1.
[27] *Op. cit.,* p. 8.
[28] *Op. cit.,* p. 72.
[29] *Life and Labor in the Old South,* p. 35.

> good or bad living had to be made in the household, for there were at that time few persons who devoted all their time to any one of the mechanic arts.[30]

The back-country of the South shows also the effect of lack of transportation facilities:

> On account of their [the settlers'] remoteness from the coast, their lack of facilities to market their crops, and the traditions they brought with them, they turned their attention to household manufacturing from the beginning of their settlement. . . . They raised their wool, cotton, flax, hemp, and hides, and made them into clothing, shoes, and harness. Their mines, mills, and forges supplied them with utensils and implements, which were usually made by the farmers themselves.[31]

The better the transportation the less families did for themselves. Those counties farthest from the rivers providing means of transportation produced, for example, a higher per capita value of textile products than those in closer touch with market facilities. Tryon found: "Counties in which the larger towns were situated had a relatively small per capita value, showing that the family system was peculiar to rural communities."[32]

The farm family's food was largely limited to their own produce. Hence the diet was very simple in contrast with the town family. The simple fare of country people is described by Earle. She writes:

> John Adams probably lived as well as any New Englander of similar position and means. A Sunday dinner at his house is thus described by a visitor: the first course was a pudding of Indian meal, molasses, and butter; then came a course of veal and bacon, neck of mutton, and vegetables. When the New Englander went to Philadelphia, his eyes opened wide at the luxury and extravagance of fare.[33]

The standard of dress as well as food was different for town and farm families. In towns some textile industries developed early, and imported textiles were to be had. The governor of Massachusetts reported in 1763:

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[30] R. M. Tryon, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-9.
[31] *Ibid.*, p. 93.
[32] *Ibid.*, p. 184.
[33] Alice M. Earle, *Home Life in Colonial Days*, pp. 159-60.

> The inhabitants of the trading towns, men, women and children, have their whole supply of clothing from Great Britain. Most of the women in all other towns have the principal part of their clothing of British manufacture; the men have more or less.

He also adds: "The poor laboring people in the country towns wear their common clothes principally of coarse homespun linens and woolens."[34] Clark says:

> In colonial days clothing indicated rank and occupation more than at present, and in this respect the colonists may be divided into two classes—those who used imported garments and fabrics, and those who used homespun. . . . A New England farmer might, by prejudice and unquestioning wont, use homespun when foreign cloths were selling at the lowest prices, while a city gentleman, even in financial distress, would hardly wear the product of family industry.[35]

Political factors

The outstanding economic factors stimulating the self-sufficiency of the family were the importance of agriculture, the absence in some communities of a good which would find a ready market overseas and, finally, the poor transportation facilities. Certain political factors were also important. These need to be examined. Tryon considers that household manufactures during the colonial period were influenced by: (1) the policy of England toward the trade and manufactures of her colonies; (2) the encouragement given household manufactures by colonial legislative assemblies; and (3) certain political notions prevalent in the colonies prior to the close of the revolution.[36]

England encouraged trade with the South because she wanted the tobacco, indigo, and cotton which were being raised there. New England and the middle colonies had for sale agricultural products such as rye, wheat, barley, beans, butter, and beef. But English landlords objected to this competition, so restrictions and regulations were passed to check imports. The colonies not being able to sell their products could not buy finished goods from England.

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[34] V. S. Clark, *History of Manufactures in the United States,* 1807-1880, p. 207.
[35] *Ibid.,* pp. 108-9.
[36] R. M. Tryon, *op. cit.,* p. 13.

In those colonies unable to buy British goods it might have been expected that industries would have developed to provide the goods desired, rather than each family should produce for itself. This, to some extent, did occur. The development of industries was limited, however, by political interference. Regulations forbade the setting up of certain textile manufactures in the colonies. The exportation of skilled workers and implements for fabricating silk, cotton, linen, and woolen cloth was also forbidden. The result of closing the market in the mother country and at the same time restricting the growth of industries in the colonies is pointed out by Bolles:

> This interference with the freedom of the colonists to trade and manufacture led to two results. First they took to wearing leather garments, because they could rarely afford the imported woollens. . . . A second result was that industry, not permitted to flourish in the open air, did so in the shade. The woman learned to weave and spin; and a large quantity of woollen, hemp, and linen cloth and other goods, was made in the privacy of the household throughout the whole country.[37]

England attempted to discourage manufactures. At the same time several colonial legislatures were offering special inducements to home manufacture and to specialized craftsmen. They especially wanted to increase the output of cloth. We do not know what success attended their efforts. The laws which were passed do, however, reveal the motives and ambitions of the people.

To encourage the manufacture of linen, woolen, and cotton cloth the General Court of Massachusetts, in 1640, passed two laws:

> In May of this year it was ordered that the magistrates and deputies of the towns inquire what seed there was in every town; what men and women were skilful in breaking, spinning, and weaving; what means there were for providing wheels; and see that the boys and girls were taught to spin. The other

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[37] Albert S. Bolles, *Industrial History of the United States* (1881), p. 370.

> law provided for a bounty on linen, woolen, and cotton cloth made in the province.[38]

This bounty proved so great a financial burden that it was soon withdrawn, but the household manufacture of clothing was encouraged in other ways.

In 1656, the General Court ordered:

> All hands not necessarily employd on other occasions, as woemen, girles, & boyes, shall, & hereby are, enjoyned to spin according to their skill & abilitie; and that the selectmen in euery towne doe consider the condition & capacitie of euery familie, & accordingly to assess them, as one or more spinners. . . . 2ly and that euery one thus assessed for a whole spinner doe, after this psent year, 1656, spin, for 30 weekes euery yeare. 3 pound p weeke of lining, cotton, or wooling . . . under the poenalty of 12*d* for euery pound short.[39]

Tryon considers this law to have been particularly effective in stimulating home manufacture of textiles. In place of rewarding the people they were penalized if they fell short of their duty.

Whether because of such laws as these, or because of natural conditions, the seventeenth century in New England was one of homespun:

> The spinning-wheel, the loom, and the dye-pot were in practically every farmer's kitchen. Most of the tailoring and the dressmaking and much of the hatmaking and shoemaking were done by members of the household. Linsey-woolsey was the commonest fabric. Tow cloth was made into towels and other coarse goods. Cotton came into use quite early and was spun on a large wheel. Checked and striped goods were manufactured and when in excess of household needs were exchanged for calico and silk. The goods bartered by the industrious women were bunting, serges, druggets, brooms, hats, and cotton and linen goods.[40]

Virginia also encouraged home manufacture of clothing and textiles. Earle writes:

> Great encouragement was given in Virginia in early days to

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[38] R. M. Tryon, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 33. It is of interest to note that these laws were passed before artificial restrictions were placed on trade. *Cf.* R. M. Tryon, pp. 18-27.

[40] R. M. Tryon, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

> the raising and manufacture of wool. The Assembly estimated that five children not over thirteen years of age could by their work readily spin and weave enough to keep thirty people clothed. Six pounds of tobacco was paid to anyone bringing to the county court-house where he resided a yard of homespun woollen cloth, made wholly in his family; twelve pounds of tobacco were offered for reward for a dozen pair of woollen hose knitted at home.[41]

At first the home manufacture of many goods was an economic necessity. Later when friction with England arose, the colonists began deliberately to plan to provide themselves with certain goods formerly purchased in England. It became the patriotic thing for wives and daughters to spend long hours spinning and weaving, and for all members of the family and community to wear homespun. From that time on the people desired to use homespun for sentimental as well as economic reasons. Home manufacture increased. At the same time the small industries already started tended to expand. The Revolutionary War was the climax of all the forces tending to throw the colonists upon their own resources. "What had been going on in the back-country of the South and in most of the northern section was now forced upon the towns on the coast and the plantations along the rivers."[42]

Household production in New England

For New England, as for the country as a whole, it is difficult even if the necessary facts were available, to present briefly a composite picture in which household production is given the proper emphasis in accord with locality and period of settlement. Clark, in tracing the development of manufacturing in the colonies, noted four stages: first, that where the manufactures are confined to the family producing for its own consumption; second, that where the household begins to produce a surplus for sale to outside consumers; third, the period of manufacture in the home to fill orders placed by merchant manufacturers; and lastly, the factory system.[43] If we trace these stages in detail we

[41] A. M. Earle, *op. cit.,* pp. 189-90.

[42] R. M. Tryon, *op. cit.,* p. 58.

[43] V. S. Clark, *op. cit.,* p. 7.

see the family becoming more and more dependent on others for the goods used. At the same time an increasing proportion of their time was going to the production of goods for exchange.

The self-sufficiency of the New England household in the first stage has frequently been commented upon. Andrews says:

> The average New England country household was a sort of self-sustaining unit which depended little on the world beyond its own gates. Its equipment included not only the usual chairs, beds, tables, and kitchen utensils and tableware, but the shoemakers' tools and shoe leather . . . surgeon's tools and apothecary stuffs, salves and ointments . . . occasionally a still or a cider press and outfits for carpentering and blacksmithing.[44]

In a paper in the *American Museum* published in 1787 a farmer reports:

> At this time my farm gave me and my whole family a good living on the produce of it, and left me one year with another one hundred and fifty silver dollars, for I never spent more than ten dollars a year which was for salt, nails, and the like. Nothing to eat, drink, or wear was bought, as my farm provided all.[45]

Earle relates an incident where one of the sons in a family needed a new suit of clothes. The father was sick. There was neither money nor wool in the house. The mother sheared some half-grown fleece from her sheep and, in less than a week, the boy wore it as clothing.[46]

The more isolated the family, the higher was the degree of self-sufficiency attained. But families seldom remained long alone. Extreme isolation was usually only temporary. Some communication was established with neighbors and markets. Chapmen and peddlers occasionally visited even the isolated families. It is, moreover, far from accurate to picture the country being settled by isolated families, although farm families did isolate themselves in America much more than they did in Europe. Although the roads were poor and settlement on the land necessitated a certain degree of isolation, yet each family was part of a community. Communication between the families was usually sufficient to establish co-operation and specialization almost from the beginning. Tryon says:

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[44] Charles M. Andrews, *Colonial Folkways,* A Chronicle of American Life in the Reign of the Georges (1919), p. 64.

[45] A. M. Earle, *op. cit.,* p. 158.

[46] *Ibid.,* p. 203.

> Soon after a new settlement was made, a sawmill, a gristmill, a distillery and a brewery would appear. . . . A blacksmith, carpenter, cooper, shoemaker, hatmaker and other handicraftsmen would also be plying their trade in a short time after the settlement was established. . . . While the professional weaver was also on the ground quite early, yet there was so much competition by the women who chose to do their own work that he did not get on in his trade as his brother handicraftsmen did in theirs. After the spinning and weaving industries had become established in the home, it was difficult to crowd them out.[47]

Not all tasks showed the same readiness to pass to the specialized worker. The first tasks to go were those requiring special skill and expensive tools. Consequently, spinning remained in the home long after the village weaver became established; and long before shops were established, the itinerant weaver went from house to house. Handlooms, Earle writes, were found in every house of any considerable size:

> Many households had a loom-room, usually in an ell part of the house; others used an attic or a shed-loft as a weaving-room. Every farmer's daughter knew how to weave as well as to spin, yet it was not recognized as wholly woman's work as was spinning; for there was a trade of hand-weaving for men. . . . Every town had professional weavers. . . . They took in yarn and thread to weave on their own looms at their own homes at so much per yard . . . and also went out working by the day at their neighbors' houses, sometimes carrying their looms many miles with them.[48]

Itinerant candle-makers also went from house to house carrying large candle molds with them, and taking charge of the candle-making.

In yet another respect families did not stand alone. A strong sense of community responsibility existed. Everyone was ready to help his neighbor, in case of sickness, or at the time of death, or in giving friendly advice in farm work. The women helped each other get adjusted to new household ways. Recipes for new foods were passed around. The community was one in any emergency. Difficult tasks such as log-rolling, stone-piling, stump-pulling, wall-building, house-raising called forth the effort of all.

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[47] *Ibid.,* p. 191.

[48] *Op. cit.,* pp. 212-3. Special reference is here made to New England, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.

After 1800 economic conditions changed rapidly. Roads improved steadily. Trade increased. Modern inventions made the most efficient tools too expensive for small-scale household use. Steam power possible only for centralized industries brought about the withdrawal of much manufacturing from the home. Forces were set in motion which led to the evolution of the modern household. The story of the change wrought by the Industrial Revolution is the subject of the chapter which follows.

THE HOUSEHOLD IN ALL AGES

After surveying the economic status of the household in earlier societies, certain general truths stand out concerning the direct production of household members to meet their own needs:

1. In no known society were households ever entirely self-sufficing. They were practically always an integral part of a larger economic group, and co-operated with others in production or in sharing the products of their labor.
2. Even where the members of the household had the skill and time, and could provide themselves with the raw materials necessary to produce the goods used, yet the economic advantage of co-operation and specialization prevented households from entirely providing for their own needs.
3. In many cases when households were not self-sufficient, a potential self-sufficiency, however, existed. That is, even though the family did not, yet it could, provide itself with the minimum essentials, and even more than these, if the need for such action arose. This was true, for example, of many colonial families.
4. One may expect to find household production relatively important in agricultural societies where the goods and the tools

used are simple, transportation and communication poor, and household groups isolated.

5. A high degree of self-sufficiency is not likely to occur unless there exist clearly defined household groups set apart in consumption and work from the clan, tribe, manor, or other larger social group.

6. Customs binding members of one household to provide for those outside their household, or to contribute labor to others, at times bound households together.

7. Except in the American colonies where an effort was made to increase household production there appears to be little if any evidence of conscious social policy formulated for the purpose of shaping household production.

8. Regardless of the importance of household production, women more than men have been the principal workers. Men have shared more in community co-operation. The nearer completion was the good, the more likely was the production of the good to be carried on by the women for her own group. Men have, however, always shared in household production, and women have always shared in specialization, co-operation, and production of goods for exchange.

CHAPTER III

CHANGES SINCE THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

The Industrial Revolution has transformed the economic system and with it the economic status of the household. Dependence, not comparative self-sufficiency, is now its outstanding characteristic. With the increase in commerce, the growth of towns and market centers, means were provided for the disposal of surplus products. Exchange developed, and increased communication and transportation brought about a market wide enough to permit more specialization. At first much of the specialization was carried on under the domestic system. The members worked at home producing goods for sale. Later, factory production increased.

As factory production increased, tasks left the home. At first goods were made in both home and factory. The family gave up home production only as they were able to find a wider market for the products they had to sell. As time went on, one form of production after another, spinning, weaving, sewing, tailoring, baking, butchering, soap-making, candle-making, brewing, preserving, laundering, dyeing, gardening, care of poultry, and other tasks have wholly or in part been transferred to commercial production. In addition, child care, education, and the care of the sick are now to a large extent carried on by paid workers. At the present time the urban not the rural family is typical; and urban families are dependent on the market even for subsistence goods.

The change did not occur with equal rapidity in all parts of the country. On the frontier as settlements expanded were to be found households much like those of isolated colonial families. In some cases groups remained isolated. They were not caught up in the swift current of change which was sweeping the country. Such was true of families in the Kentucky mountain area for example.

In examining the changes which have occurred since the Industrial Revolution, we wish first to see just what these changes actually are, noting first those which point to a decline in household production, and second those which point to an increase. We shall then be in a position to consider how these changes have affected the economic and social status of the family.

CITIES GROW

Rural agricultural life predominated during the colonial period and for many years later. A great change has occurred in recent years. Cities have grown rapidly. In 1790, 3.3 per cent of the population in the United States lived in places of 8,000 and over, and in 1820, less than 5 per cent; in 1880, 23 per cent, and in 1930, 49 per cent of the population were in cities of this size. In 1920, for the first time, more than half the people were living in places of 2,500 and more. By 1930, the proportion had risen to 56.2 per cent. The farm population fell from 29.9 per cent in 1920 to 24.8 per cent in 1930.

The changes likely to occur in direct production when a family shifts from farm to urban living are well known. Milk, eggs, poultry, meat, vegetables, fruits, fuel, and other things previously provided by the family must now be purchased. Tasks connected with the care and initial preparation of farm products also are passed to paid workers, for example, canning of fruits, vegetables, curing of meat, butter-making.

FARM PRODUCTS FROM THE HOME FARM

Not only have families moved to cities but farm families have changed their production. At one time they raised most of the basic raw materials needed to provide them with food, clothing, fuel, shelter, and house furnishings. During this period the income from sales was less important to family welfare than the products used. In very few cases is this now true. Most farm families are especially concerned with income from sale of products. Less and less energy goes to production for their own use. With the decline in self-sufficiency, the farm family has been caught in the web of specialization which has made families interdependent throughout whole nations and even beyond their boundaries.

Some interesting data pertaining to produce used by families from their own farms have been made available for the first time in the 1930 census of agriculture. Two items are of special interest here: (1) the value of the farm products used by the family, and (2) the proportion these are of the total farm products. These are shown in Table I.

TABLE I

Average Value of Farm Products Used by the Operator's Family and the Proportion These Are of the Total Farm Products; Classified by Type of Farm, the United States, 1929*

Type of farm	Average value of farm products used by operator's family†	The percentage of total farm produce used by operator's family
All	$250	13.6
Animal specialty	307	8.4
General	302	20.4
Dairy	294	10.6
Stock-raising	288	4.0
Self-sufficiency	281	66.1
Cash grain	271	9.2
Crop specialty	229	11.8
Poultry	219	11.0
Truck	212	7.4
Fruit	196	5.8
Cotton	180	17.4

* Source: Fifteenth Census of the United States 1930, *Agriculture* III, Part 1.

† The value of products used was estimated by the farmer or other members of the family providing the information for the census enumerator. It was doubtless largely based on what the product would have brought if sold in a nearby market.

Farms have been classified according to the main product raised. Hence we have general farms, cash grain, cotton, dairy, truck, and others. A separate class was made for "self-sufficing" farms. These were farms where the value of the farm products used by the family was 50 per cent or more of the total value of all products of the farm.

The average value of farm products used by all operators' families in 1929 was $250. The highest average for any group was $307 for animal-specialty farms; and the lowest was $180 for cotton farms.

To glimpse the importance to the family of the products used from the home farm we must note what proportion they were of the total farm produce. Striking differences occur. The average for all farms was 13.6 per cent. On stock-raising farms, the proportion of farm produce used by the family was very low, being only 4.0 per cent; on fruit farms it was 5.8 per cent. On general farms the proportion was 20.4 per cent. The self-sufficing farms stand out in great contrast for there the operator's family used 66.1 per cent of all the produce raised.

Self-sufficing farms are of special interest to us. In 1929, they numbered about 500,000 and represented a little less than 8 per cent of all farms. Each state has a few. In 22 out of the 48 states they constituted less than 5 per cent of the farms. In some instances these farms are found adjacent to urban centers. Here they are probably occupied by people past middle life who have retired from active business. It seems likely that few of these families are entirely or even largely dependent on the farm for a livelihood. In 4 states, however, self-sufficing farms comprise over 20 per cent of all farms. In one of these, 39 per cent of the farms were self-sufficing. These states are all in the same area: that is, the Appalachian, Alleghany and Blue Ridge mountainous area running through Kentucky, Virginia, West Virginia, and Tennessee. Here we have what appears to be a remnant of the earlier economic system.

Nor do these farms appear to be very prosperous. The average value of the farms and dwellings is very low. The total produce raised on 98 per cent of the farms in 1929 was valued at less than $1,000. On 53 per cent of the farms it was less than $400.

Recent studies of farm families also provide interesting data concerning food raised and used on farms. Between 1926 and 1929, 147 Iowa farm families kept a record for a year of goods purchased and farm produce raised. It was found that 95 per cent of poultry, milk, eggs, and cream was produced on the farm. But less than 5 per cent of the family's sweets, dried fruits, and cereals was raised. Of all the animal foods consumed, 31.7 per cent was produced by the farm. The proportion for vegetable foods was 42.5 per cent. Only 70 per cent of the potatoes was home grown. The farm produced, however, 80 per cent of the other fresh vegetables. Although all families had cream from their own farms, two-fifths of their butter was purchased.[1]

Representative studies of farm family living indicate wide differences in the importance of farm products used in contrast with cash expenditures. A group of families in North Carolina in 1926 used $70 of food and fuel from the farm for every $100 cash expended.[2] For every $100 cash expended the 147 Iowa farm families referred to above used food and fuel valued at $46.

HOUSEHOLD TASKS DECLINE

To follow further the change in family production, we must turn to the house and examine the change which has occurred in the tasks which the woman customarily performs.

So conspicuous and widespread has been the decline in these that we need spend little time in marshaling evidence that such a decline has occurred. It is not so easy, however, to see the nature and extent of the change. A decline in tasks may be said to take place when any one of three changes occurs: first, when tasks formerly performed by members are taken over by paid workers; second, when owing to changed circumstances the family no longer demands goods and services previously used; and finally, when the performance of customary tasks requires less time and energy.

For the country as a whole, it would be interesting to trace step by step the release of spinning, weaving, shoe-making, bread-making, and other tasks from the household. But household production is private and on so small a scale that this is not possible. Tryon has been able, however, to compile data on the decline in per capita value of household textile manufacture from 1825 to 1855.[3] He estimated that in New York state during this period, the per capita yardage of textile goods manufactured at home for family use fell from 8.95 to 0.27 yards.

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[1] E. E. Hoyt, *Value of Family Living on Iowa Farms,* Iowa State College Bul. 281, pp. 201-2 (1931). See also E. L. Kirkpatrick, *The Farmer's Standard of Living,* U. S. Dept. of Agri., Bul. 1466 (1926); V. R. Wertz, *Estimated Income from the Ohio Agricultural Industry,* Ohio Agri. Exp. Sta. Bul. 450 (1930); *Farm Management and Incomes of Farm Families in Laurel County, Kentucky,* Ky. Agri. Exp. Sta. Bul. 305 (1930); Helen Cannon, *The Family Finances of 195 Farm Families in Tompkins County, New York, 1927-8,* Cornell Exp. Sta. Bul. 522 (1931).

[2] W. A. Anderson, North Carolina, Agri. Exp. Sta. Bul. 258 (1928).

Long after spinning and weaving left the home, clothing construction was still carried on. Glimpses into present-day households reveal how little of this remains. Among Iowa farm families recently studied less than 6 per cent of the total amount spent for clothing went for materials to make garments at home. The chief garments made at home were women's and girls' dresses, aprons, and underwear. Yet 71 per cent of the total expenditure for these went to purchase ready-to-wear garments.[4] The practice of this small group of Iowa farm families cannot be looked upon as representative of the country as a whole. For some farm families and practically all city families clothing construction is even less important. And there are still farm families where a very large proportion of women's and children's garments is homemade.

SIMPLER STANDARDS REDUCE LABOR

Tasks have left the home, and many of those remaining have been simplified. No measure of this change exists. Here we must fall back on personal observation. Among some social classes the dining-table is no longer laden with the great variety of food that custom formerly decreed essential. More and more clothing is purchased. In addition, present styles are simple and garments made at home are more easily constructed. The reduction in labor due to the simplicity is offset to some extent by the greater variety demanded and the shorter "lifetime" of garments. Present modes of house decoration and furnishings suggest reduced labor. Fewer rugs and hangings, less bric-a-brac, and furniture of simpler design characterize modern furnishings. Varnish, paint, and other easily cleaned surfaces have replaced, for the most part, oiled and unfinished wood. Changes such as these have released many hours for the modern housewife.

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[3] *Household Manufactures in the United States,* pp. 303-76.

[4] E. E. Hoyt, *Value of Family Living on Iowa Farms,* p. 212.

METHODS AND EQUIPMENT IMPROVE

Delegation of tasks, simplification of standards, and introduction of materials which are easily cared for are important means of reducing tasks. Equally important is the use of more labor-saving methods and tools. This reduction is very realistically shown in the life story of Grandmother Brown. In describing life in Ohio in 1845, she speaks of the introduction of the iron stove, making the use of the brick oven and the fireplace no longer necessary; the use of heavy iron kettles, the lack of screens, washing out-of-doors with homemade soap, and using starch made from dough or grated potato. The family made their own candles, and the mother taught her older daughter to spin and weave.[5]

Conditions have changed greatly. Running water, central heating, and new improved drainage systems effected great labor saving. Greater attention to the home as a workshop has resulted in better kitchen arrangements, improved light and heat, and built-in conveniences. The electric light is replacing the kerosene lamp; the washboard gives way to the electric washing machine. Improved tools and machines have made the performance of many of the remaining tasks much easier, and to an increasing extent the material and construction of the tools, machines, and other equipment and furnishings have reduced the labor required in caring for them. Iron, copper, soapstone, and unfinished wood in the kitchen have been replaced by nickel, stainless steel, vitreous ware, linoleum, heat- and moisture-proof varnish, and other easy-to-care-for materials. The decrease due to better tools has to some extent been offset by higher or more elaborate standards. For example, the introduction of electric washing machines has resulted in clothes being washed more frequently.

THE INCREASE IN COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION

There are two ways of seeing the decline in household production: first, by examining household activities to see how they have changed; second, by examining commercial production and in this way becoming aware of the shift from household to commercial production. In fact, we have so little exact information of changes taking place in the home that we must examine the increase in production for the market in order to be aware of changes. The decrease in household production is written in the development of bakeries, restaurants, power laundries, day nurseries, clothing factories, and even in flourishing beauty parlors.

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[5] H. C. Brown, *Grandmother Brown's Hundred Years, 1827-1927.*

If industrial production per capita increases, we are either using more goods, or there has been a decline in those produced by the members. Since our need for food is fairly constant, an increase in the physical volume of commercial food production is especially indicative of the transfer from household to factory. A study of the growth of manufactures shows that during the period from 1899 to 1923 the increase in the physical volume of food and kindred products was 110.6 per cent. During the same period the population increased 49.3 per cent. The increase in volume of canning and preserving for this period was estimated to be 415.0 per cent. This change may have been due partly to an increase in fruits and vegetables in the diet. But since canned foods are almost ready-to-serve, the increase indicates also a decline in the amount of preparation necessary in serving food. From 1899 to 1923 the volume of commercial production of butter, cheese, and condensed milk increased 260.0 per cent, and slaughtering and meat-packing 86.5 per cent. At the same time the per capita consumption of meat declined slightly.[6]

The regular biennial census of manufactures presents some interesting data on current changes. From 1909 to 1929 the per capita value of work done in power laundries increased from $1.15 to $4.45. The per capita value of canned and preserved fruits and vegetables, pickles, jellies, preserves, and sauces was $2.75 in 1899, and $6.24 in 1929. In 1899, the per capita value of bakery products was $4.86; in 1929 it had increased to $12.55. These changes are shown in Chart I.

Commercial bakeries in the United States in 1929 produced 92.3 pounds of bread, rolls, coffee cake, crackers, sponge cakes, and machine-made cookies for every man, woman, and child in the country, and an average of 20 doughnuts each. From 1927 to 1929 the per capita production of commercial bread, rolls,

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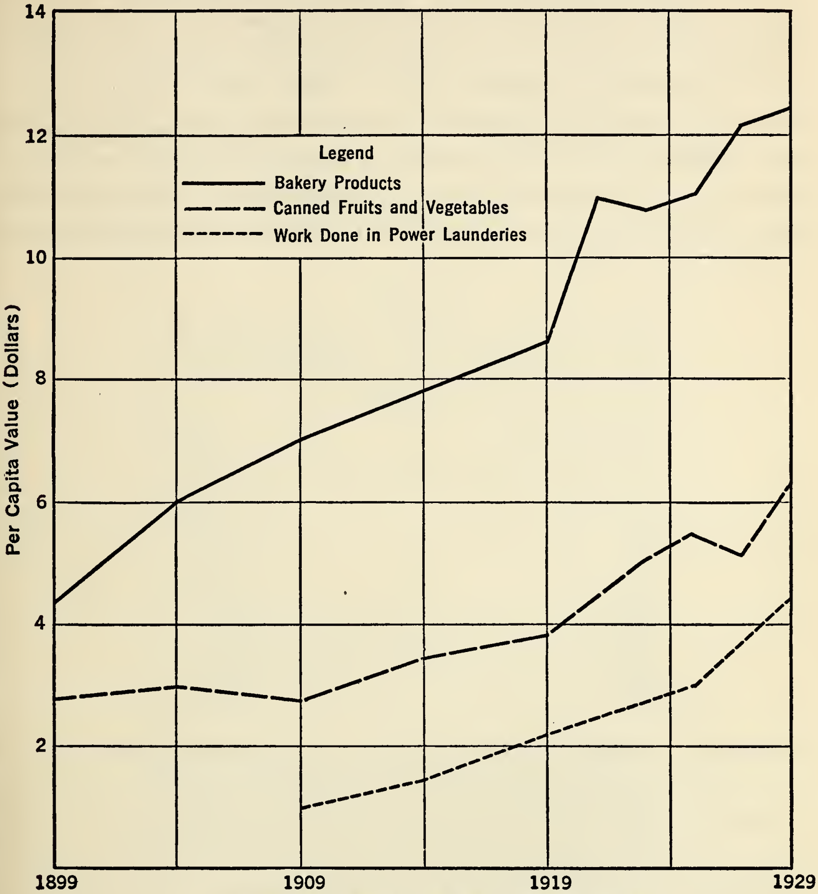
[6] R. Pearl, *The Nation's Food* (1920), p. 222.

CHART I

Per capita value of: (1) Work done in Power Laundries, 1909-1929; (2) Commercial Bakery Products, 1899-1929; (3) Canned and Preserved Fruits and Vegetables, Pickles, Jellies, Preserves and Sauces, 1899-1929*



*Source: Biennial Census of Manufacture

From the output of bakeries and canneries in the United States was deduced or added the balance of exports and imports. The per capita value of these was adjusted to the 1926 price level using the wholesale food price index. In this way we arrive at a very crude measure of the rapidity with which these tasks have been leaving the home.

and coffee cake increased over 9 per cent—from 74.3 pounds per capita in 1927 to 81.2 pounds in 1929. During the same period, from 1927 to 1929, the per capita production of prepared flour increased 20 per cent. Such facts point to the decline of home baking and the use by the housewife of raw materials in a more advanced stage of preparation.

Clothing construction is also leaving the home. The census of manufactures also throws some light on this change. There has been a steady increase in per capita volume of ready-to-wear clothing. This increase has, without doubt, been partly due to increased clothing consumption. In Table II is shown the per capita value of certain ready-to-wear clothing made in factories from 1899 to 1929. The group of clothing selected is one for which home production is still quite important. The per capita value of factory production in 1929 was three and a half times as high as in 1899.[7]

TABLE II

THE PER CAPITA VALUE OF CERTAIN READY-TO-WEAR CLOTHING, PRODUCED IN THE UNITED STATES, 1899–1929*

Year	Value per capita†
1929	$15.56
1927	13.22
1925	10.40
1923	11.33
1921	10.00
1919	8.51
1914	8.86
1909	7.50
1904	5.67
1899	4.47

* Included is the output of establishments whose principal products are women's, girls', and children's clothing (except that made in knitting mills) such as suits, dresses, skirts, petticoats, kimonos, dressing sacks, house dresses, bungalow aprons, jackets, capes, underwear, shirt-waists . . . (corsets, millinery, gloves, mittens, footwear, hosiery, and underwear and outwear made in knitting mills not included).

† Using the wholesale price index of textile products, the value of output was reduced to the 1926 price level.

GAINFULLY OCCUPIED WOMEN

Many other changes also indicate the decline in household tasks. Women have always been the principal household workers.

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[7] See also Bur. of Bus. Research, Harvard University, *Distribution of Textiles* (1926).

Consequently the increase in their gainful occupation is indicative of a decline in household production. In 1870, 14.7 per cent of the entire female population 16 years and over were gainfully occupied. In 1920, the proportion had risen to 24.0 per cent, and by 1930 to 25.3 per cent. Between 1920 and 1930, gainful occupations among women under 20 years of age declined in importance. In higher age groups a marked rise occurred.

Since the home duties of a married woman are usually less easily delegated than those of her unmarried sister, the recent trend in the gainful employment of married women is especially significant. This is shown in Table III. From 1890 to 1930, gainful occupation among married women increased more rapidly than among single women, rising from 4.6 to 11.7 per cent.

TABLE III

The Percentage of Married Women, 15 Years and Over, Engaged in Gainful Occupation, in the United States, 1890–1930*

Year	Engaged in gainful occupation
1930	11.7
1920	9.0
1910	10.7
1900	5.6
1890	4.6

* There are some reasons for doubting whether the decrease in the percentage of gainfully employed from 1910 to 1920 represents an actual decrease in the extent to which women were engaged in gainful occupation. See pp. 18–28, Census Monograph IX.

The change in gainful occupation as it relates to household production can best be seen in the decline in the number of women engaged in homemaking from 1890 to 1930. Prior to 1930 no direct information was published concerning the number of women whose principal job was homemaking. Reasonable estimates for the earlier years are, however, possible. These are shown in Table IV. The method of estimating is simple. From the total number of women, 15 years and over, were subtracted: (1) those listed by the census as gainfully occupied; (2) those in school; (3) an estimated number of those disabled and idle; (4) an estimated number of those not in the above groups and living in boarding-houses and hotels, hence not assuming responsibility for any great volume of family tasks.[8] This number was then divided by the estimated number of private families. In 1900 there was on the average of one homemaker for every private family. By 1920 there had been a decrease of about 10 per cent.

A similar estimate for 1930 shows approximately 25,500,000 homemakers and an average of 0.86 per private family. At the same time the census reports approximately 24,500,000 homemakers as not gainfully employed. Since there were nearly thirty million families in 1930, five million of these were without homemakers whose main job was production for their families.

This difference between the estimate and the census findings is due to two things: (1) inaccuracies in the estimate; (2) a difference in the definition of a homemaker. According to the census definition, a homemaker is that woman member of the family who is responsible for the care of the home and family; hired housekeepers are not included. There is, however, only one homemaker to a family. Daughters or other family members who assist, or even assume so much responsibility that gainful work is not possible, are not listed as homemakers by the census. These latter were, however, included in the estimate.

TABLE IV

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF WOMEN 15 YEARS AND OVER, ENGAGED IN HOMEMAKING, IN THE UNITED STATES, 1890–1920*

Year	Total number of homemakers	Number of homemakers per private family
1920	22,169,387	0.92
1910	18,899,936	0.94
1900	16,255,469	1.02
1890	13,491,588	1.08

* Adapted from Hazel Kyrk and Margaret Reid, "An Estimate of the Number of Homemakers in the United States," *J. H. Ec.*, XXI (June, 1929), 424–6.

APARTMENT DWELLING INCREASES

With the growth of cities apartment dwelling has been increasing. Apartment dwelling may be a factor causing household production to decline, or it may be the result of the decline in work carried on in the home. More crowded living conditions cause certain household tasks to be discontinued. Also the shift from houses to apartments tends to reduce household labor since the smaller space is usually more easily cared for. Moreover, in apartments special attention has usually been given to labor-saving conveniences which reduce the labor necessary to maintain a given standard; and apartment dwellers seldom share to any extent in the care of the furnace, the building, the lawn. Such tasks, commonly performed by the household dwellers, are carried on by a paid worker. As apartment dwelling has been increasing, one-family dwellings have at the same time been getting smaller and also more convenient. Thus the labor of caring for the detached house has also been lessened.

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[8] For details of the calculation see H. Kyrk and M. Reid, "An Estimate of the Number of Homemakers in the United States," *J. H. Ec.*, XXI (June, 1929), 424-6.

In 1930, 63.3 per cent of urban families were living in one-family dwellings, 16.5 per cent in two-family dwellings, and 20.2 per cent living in three-or-more-family dwellings.[9]

Cities are by no means uniform with respect to apartment dwelling. Six out of the 97 cities, with 100,000 or more of population, had less than 5 per cent of their families in three-or-more-family dwellings. In 9 of these cities more than 50 per cent of the families were so housed. Manhattan is unique, having 95 per cent of its families in three-or-more-family dwellings.

Present housing is important; and so also is new building. This can be seen in the building permits for private residences which are shown in Table V. It may be seen here that the importance of one-family dwellings has declined and that of multi-family dwellings increased from 1921 to 1928. The post-war building peak was reached in 1925. Of the new dwellings provided in 1928, in cities of 500,000 and more, only 22 per cent were one-family dwellings. In Chicago and New York the proportion of these during that year fell to 8 per cent. Since 1928, the erection of multi-family dwellings has fallen off more than single-family housing. This change in trend may be due to a changing standard which attaches greater importance to the detached house. It may also be due to a temporary over-expansion

[9] Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, *Families*.

in apartment buildings. An over-expansion is more likely to occur in apartments than in one-family houses.

Not only is there a trend toward more apartment dwelling but toward smaller apartments as well. During the five-year period 1913 to 1917 inclusive 45 per cent of the new apartments approved by the Chicago Board of Health were less than and 25 per cent more than five rooms. From 1927 to 1931, 75 per cent of the new apartments had less than five and only 8 per cent more than five rooms.[10] In 1913 the average number of rooms per newly constructed apartment in New York City was 4.19; in 1926 it was 3.49 and in 1928, 3.34.[11]

This decline in size of apartments may signify that families on the whole are living in more crowded quarters. But since there is probably an increasing number of two-member and childless families, the overcrowding is not so great as these figures

TABLE V

Percentage of Families Provided for in One- and in Multi-Family Dwellings in 257 Identical Cities, in the United States, 1921–1931 (Inclusive)*

Year	Percentage of families provided for in	
	One-family dwellings	Multi-family dwellings
1921	58.3	24.4
1922	47.5	31.2
1923	45.8	33.0
1924	47.6	30.9
1925	46.0	36.4
1926	40.7	45.4
1927	38.3	48.3
1928	35.2	53.7
1929	40.2	48.5
1930	45.7	42.2
1931	49.2	39.3
1932	71.3	16.3

* United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Monthly Labor Review*, 36 (May, 1933), 846.

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[10] *Recent Social Trends*, Vol. I, p. 667.

[11] *Regional Survey of New York and Its Environs.* VI; "Buildings: Their Uses and the Spaces About Them" (1931), p. 238.

alone would indicate. Moreover, many of the smaller apartments are no doubt occupied by bachelor men and women who formerly lived in hotels and rooming-houses.

The growth of hotels is at times pointed to as an indication that household production is declining. From her study of the Chicago families Monroe, however, concludes: "Homemakers have not as yet been freed from housekeeping responsibilities to the extent believed by many persons viewing the growth of hotels in large cities." Only 5 per cent of the Chicago wives and mothers were living with relatives, and only 3 per cent were lodging. Monroe goes on to say: "These findings seem to indicate that the growth in the number of hotels is not due so much to an increased number of lodging families as to other factors."[12]

FAMILIES ARE SMALLER AND CHILDREN FEWER

Some tasks have been delegated and others simplified; better methods and tools have been introduced. At the same time the family has been getting smaller and there are fewer and fewer children in each home to be cared for. This change has reduced the volume of certain tasks.

Regular census reports give data on the private family only for 1790, 1890, 1900, and 1930. In 1790 it averaged 5.7 persons, and 4.0 in 1930: that is, the private family was 40.2 per cent larger in 1790 than in 1930.[13] The distribution of families of various sizes in 1790, 1900, and 1930 is shown in Table VI, and Chart II. In 1790, the five-member family, in 1900, the three-member family and in 1930, the two-member family occurred with greatest frequency. In 1790, 11.2 per cent of the families had 7 members; in 1900 and 1930, the proportion was 7.7 and 4.7 respectively.

A study made by Baber and Ross of the change in the size of American families in one generation indicates an even more striking change. They state: "By comparing the 5.44 children per fertile family in the 'past generation' with the 3.35 per family in the 'present generation,' we find an amazing decrease of 38.42 per cent. A shrinkage of more than three-eighths in a single generation."[14] A study was made in Ohio of maternal and present generation of native white farm families. Mothers whose families were completed in 1927 averaged 4.2 children. This average was 34 per cent less than the number of children borne by their mothers.[15]

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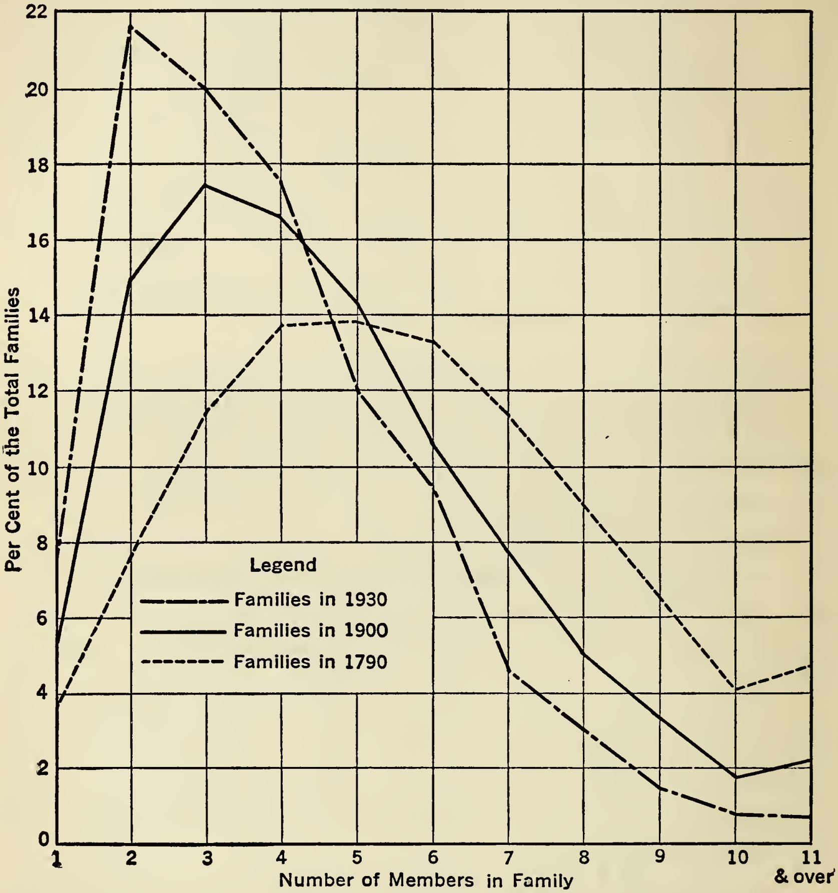
[12] *Chicago Families* (1932), p. 261.

[13] *A Century of Population Growth,* Bureau of Census (1909), p. 96.

CHART II

The Percentage of Private Families having a Specified Number of Members, in the United States, in 1790, 1900 and 1930



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[14] *Changes in the Size of American Families in One Generation,* University of Wisconsin Studies in Social Science and History, No. 10 (1924), p. 26.

[15] C. C. Lively, *Growth Cycle of the Farm Family,* Ohio Agri. Exp. Sta., Mimeo. Bul. 51 (1932), p. 11.

TABLE VI

Percentage of Private Families Having a Specified Number of Members, in United States: 1790, 1900, 1930*

Size of family	1790	1900	1930
1	3.7	5.1	7.9
2	7.8	15.0	23.4
3	11.7	17.6	20.8
4	13.8	16.9	17.5
5	13.9	14.2	12.0
6	13.2	10.9	7.6
7	11.2	7.7	4.7
8	9.0	5.2	2.8
9	6.5	3.2	1.6
10	4.2	1.9	0.9
11 or more	4.9	2.2	0.9
All sizes	100.0	100.0	100.0

* *A Century of Population Growth,* p. 98; and Fifteenth Census of the United States 1930, *Families.*

The smaller family is due largely to a decline in the number of children per family. The birth-rate has been falling. The rate per 1,000 of total population in 1923 was 22.2 and in 1931, 18.0. At the same time, however, the death-rate of young children has been greatly reduced. The net effect has been, nevertheless, a decline in the number of children reaching the age of one, per 1,000 population.

The great decrease in the burden of child care is apparent in

TABLE VII

Number of Children under Five Years of Age per 1,000 Women 16 to 44 Years of Age in the White Population in United States, 1800 to 1930*

Year	Number of children
1930	402
1920	489
1900	531
1880	611
1860	705
1840	835
1820	955
1800	1,000

* Census Monograph, XI, p. 15.

the change in the number of children under five per 1,000 women of child-bearing age. (See Table VII.) From 1880 to 1930 the number of children under five years per 1,000 women in white population decreased 34 per cent. The greatest change in any decade occurred from 1920 to 1930 when the number of children per 1,000 women fell only slightly less than 18 per cent. Since child care is a very important part of household production, this change reflects a marked decline in tasks and responsibilities.

In addition to the decline in the number of children per family the size of the private household has been affected by a decline in the number of adult relatives living together. Husband's employees are also less frequently members of the household circle.

SOME TASKS HAVE INCREASED

With attention concentrated on the decline in household production or on the changes bringing it about, a very one-sided picture is presented. All has not been subtraction. Higher standards and changed conditions of living have brought about an elaboration of old tasks. In addition new tasks have been introduced, and with the decline in domestic service the burden of work carried on in the house has fallen more and more on members of the family.

Income apportionment, budgeting, marketing, and other tasks related to income management and expenditure are important new tasks which have been added. Women must learn how to use money and credit, must become familiar with markets and how to recognize "best" goods.

The increased labor necessary to keep the house, furnishings, and clothing clean because of the smoke and dust of cities and roads affords a good illustration of a task which has increased with our changed mode of living. The significance of the dust and smoke of cities is brought out by the following estimate for the city of Chicago: "Excessive laundry bills, injury to curtains and fabrics, the smudges of buildings and the corrosion of metal . . . vary from $10 to $15 per year per capita. Taking the average figure of $12, and the population as 3,000,000, gives the figure $36,000,000 per year . . . chargeable to the city's smoke."[16] No consideration is given here to the work done by family members, and the greatest burden of cleaning undoubtedly falls on them.

The influence of changed standards is hard to evaluate. Some changes point to simplification, and others to greater elaboration; and all families have not been equally affected. Perhaps for the lower-income groups, changes on the whole have tended to elaborate tasks. Conventional standards as to what is "nice" have continually demanded cleaner linen, more table service, more carefully ironed garments.

The effect of the changed standards is described by one writer after contact with the unskilled laboring group in London:

> The general rise in the standard of comfort on which social reformers congratulate themselves has made life harder for the mothers. "When I was ten years old," said one, "I was helping my parents by gathering stones for the farmers; now, I send four girls to school every day with starched pinafores and blacked boots. Except on Sundays, my father never had anything but bread and cold bacon, or cheese, for his dinner; now I have to cook a hot dinner every day for the children and a hot supper every evening for my man."[17]

Of the effect of changed standards, on the American housewife's use of time, one writer says:

> Because we housewives of today have the tools to reach it, we dig every day after the dust that grandmother left to a spring cataclysm. If few of us have nine children for a weekly bath, we have two or three for a daily immersion. If our consciences don't prick over vacant pie shelves or empty cooky jars, they do over meals in which a vitamin may be omitted or a calorie lacking.[18]

The new tasks introduced by a change in standards are illustrated by the problems faced by an immigrant housewife coming from an agricultural community in Europe to an American city.

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[16] *Chicago's Health,* XXIII (1929, January 15), p. 8.

[17] Anna Martin, "The Married Working Woman," *The Nineteenth Century,* LXVIII, 1105-6.

[18] G. and D. C. Hambridge, "Leisure to Live," *Ladies' Home Journal* (May, 1930), 30.

In writing of the adjustment to American ways, Breckinridge says:

> The duties of the housewife may not be as many, but the work they involve may be more. This is true, for example, in the matter of feeding the family. In Lithuania soup was the fare three times daily, and there were only a few variations in kind. Here the family soon demands meat, coffee and other things that are different from the food which she cooked in the old country. Occasionally the situation is further complicated by the insistence by dietetic experts that the immigrant mother cannot feed her family intelligently unless she has some knowledge of food values.[19]

Increased knowledge of hygiene has initiated higher standards of cleanliness and increased the labor of caring for food, clothing, house, and furnishings, quite apart from the greater difficulty due to city life.

Standards of child care have also undergone a change. Though there has been, for some groups, a simplification of food standards for the adult members, in practically all groups there is a tendency to increase the attention given to child nutrition and food preparation. The child, in place of eating what is prepared for the other members of the family, must frequently have his food specially prepared. In addition, the cramped living quarters of many families in the city necessitate a special effort in order that the child receive the requisite amount of fresh air, sunshine, and freedom to play. Groves considers that the "responsibilities of the home in regard to health, especially with reference to little children, are an impressive illustration of the way in which activities of a more qualitative sort have replaced the mechanical operations that have been farmed out."[20]

One other change has tended to increase the direct contribution of the family members. The proportion of families having paid domestic workers has been steadily declining. As a result some families are performing tasks for themselves that were previously the duty of a maid, cook, or other hired servant. From 1910 to 1920 there was a decline of 21 per cent in women employed as servants.[21] Prior to 1930 a detailed classification of those included in domestic service was given only for 1910 and 1920. But sufficient detail is not given so that the number of paid household workers can be exactly determined. When the groups of "domestic" workers, which seem likely to contain the greatest number of those working in households, are combined for 1910 and for 1920 and are contrasted with the number of families for these years, it is found that there were 85 "domestic servants" to every 1,000 families in 1910, and only 58 for every 1,000 families in 1920, the proportion being 32 per cent lower in 1920 than in 1910.[22] The Lynds found that: "It is apparently about half as frequent for Middletown housewives to hire full-time servant girls to do their housework today as in 1890."[23]

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[19] *New Homes for Old* (1921), p. 44.

[20] E. Groves and W. Ogburn, *American Marriage and Family Relationships*, p. 50.

The actual transfer to paid workers of such tasks as the growing of raw materials, the baking of bread, the construction of garments, the cleaning and care of house and furnishings, and the care of children is the most conspicuous aspect of the change wrought in household production by the Industrial Revolution. At the same time women have in increasing numbers become gainful workers, families have moved from rural into urban communities, and into smaller dwellings. Families are smaller, and there are fewer children to care for. Then too the tasks remaining are more easily done because garments and furnishings are, for example, simpler and more easily cleaned and many labor-saving tools, machines, and methods have been introduced. Less conspicuous has been the increase in household production which has in part replaced many former tasks. New tasks, for example, marketing and budgeting, now claim a part of family labor. Changed living conditions have in many cases made cleaning and child care more difficult. Higher standards, e.g., in food preparation and serving, care of clothing, care and training of children, have greatly increased the burden of many housewives, and the decline in domestic servants has forced family members in some homes to assume new duties.

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[21] *Women in Gainful Employment,* Census Monograph, IX, p. 82.

[22] The following groups were considered to include the majority of household servants and the change in these is taken to indicate the change in paid workers in the home: housekeepers and stewards, launderers and laundresses (not in a laundry), and other servants. It is realized that there are here included many who are not household workers and that some household workers in other groups have been omitted; yet it is felt that no great error would arise in assuming that changes in these relative to the number of families would indicate the decline in the proportion of homes having paid servants. The change in classification in 1930 makes further comparison difficult.

[23] R. S. and H. M. Lynd, *Middletown,* p. 169.

THE EFFECT OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION ON THE FAMILY

To weigh the effects of the Industrial Revolution on the family we must consider gains, losses, and new problems that have emerged. Important changes have occurred in: (1) standard of living, (2) economic security of the family, and (3) the rôle of the various members. Evidence of this higher standard made possible by more efficient production is everywhere about us, not only in education for the masses, health and medical services formerly undreamed of, but also in many new goods. Bathtubs, automobiles, radios, rayon, and hundreds of other products are the direct outcome of highly specialized, mass production. Many goods formerly used are now of better quality and are provided in greater quantity and at a lower price.

Certain qualities of some goods have, however, depreciated. This is due in some cases to a change in consumer demand. Durability in certain textile fabrics is no longer so highly regarded as formerly. But change in demand is not the only reason for this. Producers are now interested directly in profit and only indirectly in quality. Consumer ignorance is exploited, and misrepresentation and fraud in regard to quality occur. The loss in quality in some goods is due to the distance which separates producer and consumer. It is practically impossible, for example, to secure fruits and vegetables from the market of the same quality as when they come directly from the garden where they were brought to maturity.

The standard of living has on the whole been raised. But accompanying it has been a decline in security: the worker has lost control of his job. Family welfare is no longer conditioned directly by the skill, dexterity, and judgment with which labor is applied. Price fluctuations and market conditions more and more govern family fortunes and determine whether the members lack or have an abundance of food, clothing, and other things. Not only does the household depend on others to provide the goods it desires but the members are largely dependent on the economic system for providing them with an opportunity to earn a money income. The worker today may find himself unemployed through no fault of his own or of the employer for whom he ordinarily works.

Unemployment as a problem affecting the masses has come since the Industrial Revolution. Chenery writes:

> Unemployment and the fear of unemployment are twin evils created by the factory system. . . . The possibility of being workless hangs over the majority of wage earners. . . . In order to obtain employment he [the worker] must ordinarily reside in congested cities, where the possibility of subsidiary means of support are denied him. Usually he does not own the house or the tenement he lives in. He neither cultivates nor harvests the vegetables and fruits which his family consumes. . . . His clothes are bought, not made at home. . . . The modern factory worker must retain his job if he wishes to continue alive, and yet he knows from bitter experience that at recurrent intervals, regardless of zeal or fitness, many men and women will not be employed.[24]

Unemployment and the fear of unemployment are probably the outstanding disadvantages of the present system when viewed from the standpoint of the family. The chief compensating advantage is the improved goods and services now available.

The economic security of the family has been affected in yet another way. Formerly families, generation after generation, lived in the same community. Consequently family coherence was marked, and the feeling of kinship strong. There was then no question of who should care for the old, the sick, the destitute. That was an acknowledged family responsibility. The greater mobility of population has diminished the sense of kinship so that family responsibility outside the marriage group is now much weaker than formerly. Each individual family is expected to provide for its own emergencies. It is thrown on its own resources in a society where it has less and less control over means of livelihood. Children's homes, health insurance, and old age pensions are examples of social institutions which are developing to replace the functions of the larger kinship group. Society is only just becoming conscious of this aspect of the changed family.

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[24] W. L. Chenery, *Industry and Human Welfare*, pp. 115-6.

The change in method of earning a living has had important social effects for the family. When the household group was largely self-sufficing, the members worked together for a common end, each contributing in some way to the finished product. The effect of the change has been commented on by Groves:

> When the security and comfort of the family depended directly upon the contributions of its various members, the bond of common interest was naturally strong. The necessity of co-operation was self-evident, and discord of any serious sort immediately brought about consequences which led to suffering and in extreme cases even challenged the survival of the family and its members.[25]

Family co-operation in production strengthened the sense of interdependence. The joint activities were also an important medium of companionship. Borsodi believes that: "It is easy to overlook the fact that lasting affections do not survive in a vacuum. Affection is most often produced as the result of experience shared in common." He believes that: "The greater the volume of common activities the stouter the emotional ties."[26]

In the present industrial system the individual, not the family, is the important unit. To him the wage or salary is paid. The wage-earner may feel that he has a prior claim to the returns from *his* labor. He may be reluctant to relinquish a "fair" portion to meet the needs of the other members of the group, or he may consider his sharing an act of generosity. Those carrying on unpaid work have in some respects become even more dependent than under former conditions. They produce for themselves fewer of the goods which they need and hence depend more on money income to supply their needs. They are in addition dependent on others to provide them with the raw materials and the tools necessary for their work.

The possibility of the various members contributing to the money income has also undergone a change. Pinchbeck in discussing the change in the position of women following the agrarian revolution says: "With the land and the stock went a woman's opportunities of earning and when these disappeared, it mattered little how willing and anxious she was to work; she could no longer assist in the support of the family, nor could she maintain her own economic independence."[27]

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[25] E. Groves and W. F. Ogburn, *American Marriage and Family Relationships*, p. 21.

[26] *This Ugly Civilization*, p. 180.

In contrast with the independence of gainful workers, and probably also with their own position before marriage, the dependence of housewives is especially striking. The shift from household to factory production has brought with it, however, greater freedom for many women. Far-reaching has been the effect. Freedom to earn an independent income in any one of many occupations is largely responsible for the marked change in the economic and social status of women.

With the transfer of many tasks from the home, household production has become more and more a one-person job. As a result there is little opportunity for children to contribute to the real income of the family through assisting in household production. During pioneer days children were valuable aids to their parents in the struggle for a living. Later in the early stages of factory production the labor of children was widely used. The evils arising therefrom led to a legislation restricting the gainful employment of children. As a consequence children now contribute little to the family support. The burden on the adult members has, for many families, been met by an increase in the real wages of the adult members. Yet the long period throughout which the child must be provided for at times places a very heavy burden on adult members especially in the lower-income groups.

The change in type of production carried on by family members has affected the contribution which the woman in the home is now able to make. The household in the main has ceased to produce basic necessaries. As a result it has become increasingly difficult for the woman in the low-income groups to contribute adequately to the family needs through household production alone. Instances occur where the wife, performing the household activities which custom and tradition dictate, may be rightly looked upon as a luxury. The possible financial disadvantage of marriage was brought out in a recent study of incomes and living costs of faculty families at Yale University. The writers point out, for example, that at the $3,000 level an unmarried man "has no great surplus but a comfortable life. For a man and wife it is a life in the simplest plane with little money for books and nothing for recreation and saving other than $200 to $300 for insurance."[28]

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[27] *Women Workers and the Industrial Revolution,* p. 44.

While household production has been declining, the real wages of the husband have increased so that he has been able to provide an increasing number of goods. In many homes the wife is still a busy person. In others the household tasks have diminished to a point where the woman is a "lady of leisure." Custom and convention endorse the change. The leisure of the wife has, in former times, been a symbol of economic status only among a limited group. In our society a wider group is affected than at any previous time.

Mention should also be made of the change in the educational and recreational value of production. Factory work, for example, has not the same educational value as the varied tasks of the household and therefore it is not so suited to the child, who needs training to develop his latent abilities. Moreover, factory tasks do not afford the same creative opportunities for the worker. The worker must consequently seek creative expression in his leisure hours. Play and recreation have more and more been relegated to free time, hence there is greater need for shorter hours of labor.

After tracing the economic changes affecting the family during the past 150 years certain major problems stand out. Two are of special interest and importance: the first, the increasing economic security of the family which presses for immediate consideration; and the second, the rendering of a well-considered and thoughtful decision concerning the rôle of women in this new economic system.

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[28] Y. Henderson and M. R. Davis, *Incomes and Living Costs of a University Faculty,* p. 7.

PART III

THE STATUS OF HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION

CHAPTER IV

PRESENT-DAY HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION

Changes in family production since the Industrial Revolution have been discussed in Chapter III. The most obvious change has been its decline. A change in character has also occurred. Less production of raw materials and less manufacture of goods now occur; and choice-making, buying, and assembling of goods have become more important. In tracing recent changes present-day household production has in part been described. We wish now to take a cross section, to see the relative importance of the household as a producing unit and also the importance of individual tasks. The share of household members in their performance, the extent to which labor-saving equipment is used, and its effect on household production will also be examined.

What tasks do families commonly carry on for themselves? In the mind of each person arises a picture of the households with which he is most familiar; and many perhaps feel that no two households are exactly alike. Differences abound but even so certain activities are common to most households. These common household tasks are listed below as the initial step in getting a picture of the economic contribution of present-day households.

Productive Activities of Present-day Households

A. Management:

1. Choice-making.
2. Income apportionment, or budgeting.
3. Task, time, and energy apportionment.
4. Planning ways and means of carrying on tasks.
5. Actual direction of the tasks including supervision.

B. Performance:

1. Clerical work in connection with management, e.g., the checking and paying of bills, preparing instructions for workers, the keeping of accounts, and making of other records.

2. Purchasing of food, clothing, equipment, furnishings, and other goods required by the household or by the individual members of the household group.
3. "Housework":
    - *a.* Preparation, serving, care and preservation of food, and clearing away of meals.
    - *b.* Construction and repair of clothing and furnishings, including such tasks as sewing, mending, darning, and "fancy work."
    - *c.* Cleaning and care of the house, furnishings, clothing, and equipment, including laundering, daily, weekly, and special cleaning, care of the fires, disposal of waste, repair work of various kinds, care of pets.
4. Work outside the house, e.g., care of the house surroundings, gardening, dairy and poultry work, operation and care of car.
5. Care of the members of the family not included in the above:
    - *a.* Physical care of children and the sick.
    - *b.* Child training and education, including supervision of play.
6. Going and coming on household business, answering the telephone, the door, receiving packages, being on call or present in case of need, e.g., remaining in the house because of a sleeping child.

Most of the above tasks occur with comparative frequency in the "typical" home. This conclusion is borne out by the tasks reported by Oregon homemakers during a week of "normal activity." Cleaning, meal preparation and clearing away were reported by every household. Washing was reported by 98 per cent of all households and mending by 83 per cent of farm and 87 per cent of town and village. Sewing was only slightly less frequent than mending.[1]

MANAGEMENT IN THE HOUSEHOLD

The classification of tasks given above helps us to see more clearly the productive contribution of the household. Some explanation should perhaps be made of the division of tasks into management and performance.

In the household, the task of management is likely to be somewhat overlooked unless it is given special attention. The worker and manager are usually one. Furthermore, separate time is often not given to management. Many a housewife makes her plans while she cares for children, washes dishes, or does the weekly mending.

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[1] M. Wilson, unpublished data.

To distinguish between management and performance let us consider first the general nature of management: the way it operates, and why it is necessary to any enterprise. Management involves guidance and control. It is essentially the same whether it has to do with an industry conducted for profit, or an institution such as the household. Management may well be conceived as the mainspring of the enterprise. It is present wherever deliberation is called for: when a choice must be made between alternative methods or modes of action. It is difficult to imagine an undertaking so simple and automatic in its adjustment and independent of its surroundings and the changes which there occur that no management is needed in order that it fulfil an intended purpose. The act of formulating policies and directing the use of resources, in brief, *the making of decisions is the substance of management.*

Management in the household consists largely of: (1) choice-making, that is, deciding what specific goods will best meet the needs and desires of the members of the family; (2) income apportionment, involving decisions as to the use of money income; (3) task and time apportionment, including decisions as to the use of time and energy in household production, the securing of co-operation of family members, the assignment to various members of tasks to be performed, and the arranging of these in the time sequence desired; (4) the planning of ways and means of carrying on household tasks, which involves finding satisfactory methods for specific tasks, and in many cases presents economic, technical, and esthetic problems; and (5) the actual direction of the household which includes giving orders and supervising the work of others. This last is important only when management and performance are carried on by different workers.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION

Changes since the Industrial Revolution have made some people feel that household production is no longer very important. A rather strange opinion, is it not, when throughout the length and breadth of the land most homes have an adult woman who, because of household tasks, carries on little or no gainful work.

Every industrial or occupational group seeks some measure of its importance to society, so we look about for some means of measuring the household's contribution. The ideal way would be to discover what proportion of the total real income comes from family labor expended to provide the members with goods.[2] In order to do this, we would have to measure what the family does for itself and compare this amount with goods and services from other sources. But difficulties are encountered. Except to a very limited extent the goods produced and used by the family cannot satisfactorily be measured in dollars and cents.[3] It is felt that the best general measure of the importance of household production lies in the number of workers thus engaged. Objections may be made to using such a measure. Many workers supposedly doing full-time work may be idle much of the day, and some may be doing very inferior work. A measure of the quantity and the quality of the goods is more important than the number of workers or the hours spent. But since a more accurate measure is not available, the number of workers will serve to convey some notion of the importance of this type of production.

Workers engaged in household production are in the main women listed by the census as having no gainful occupation. Many family members counted as gainfully occupied undoubtedly carry on many household tasks. They prepare meals, clean rooms, do the family shopping, care for children. Instructions to census enumerators indicate this: "In the case of a woman doing housework in her own home and having no other employment, the entry . . . should be *none*. . . . If a woman, in addition to doing her housework in her own home, *regularly* earns money by some occupation, whether pursued in her own home or outside, that occupation should be returned."[4] Many women are counted as gainfully employed who are doing only part-time gainful work. On the other hand, many women not counted among the gainfully employed undoubtedly carry on some gainful work:

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[2] Real income of a family consists of all goods and services used over a period of time. Included are, for example, goods provided by family labor, "free" goods made available by the community, as well as goods and services purchased with money income.

[3] See Chapter IX for more detailed discussion of this point.

[4] Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920, Population, Vol. IV, p. 30.

> For the woman who works *only occasionally* or *only a short time each day* at outdoor or garden work, or in the dairy, or in caring for live stock or poultry, the return should be *none.*
>
> Keeping boarders or lodgers should be returned as an occupation if the person engaged in it relies upon it as his (or her) principal means of support or principal source of income. . . . If, however, a family keeps a few boarders or roomers merely as a means of supplementing or eking out the earnings or income obtained from other occupations or from other sources, no one in the family should be returned as a boarding or lodging housekeeper.[5]

Certainly many in regular gainful occupations perform household tasks, and those whose main occupation is household production carry on some gainful work. These in part counterbalance, and tend to justify, the assumption that the probable proportion of workers without regular or important gainful occupation is an index of the relative importance of household production.

The proportion of gainfully employed males and females in the various age groups indicates the influence of household production on gainful employment. This is shown in Chart III. In every age group the percentage of females employed is lower than the percentage of males; and we know that in every age group the claims of household production on women are greater than on men. In 1930 for the age group of 18 to 19 years, 71 per cent of males and 41 per cent of females were gainfully occupied. In the 20 to 24 age group, 90 per cent of males and 42 per cent of females were employed, while in the 25 to 29 year group, 97 per cent of the males and only 31 per cent of the females were gainfully occupied. In the chart, the area between the two lines is a rough measure of the labor diverted to household production.

For 1930, the census reports approximately 24,500,000 homemakers non-gainfully occupied. At the same time there were approximately 49 million persons gainfully occupied. The workers in manufacturing and mechanical industries totaled 14.1 million, and in agriculture 10.5 million. In these two industries together, the number of workers is about equal to the women engaged in homemaking. Thus, it is seen that household production makes much greater claims on the total number of workers than does any single gainful occupation. Approximately one-third of all workers are thus engaged.

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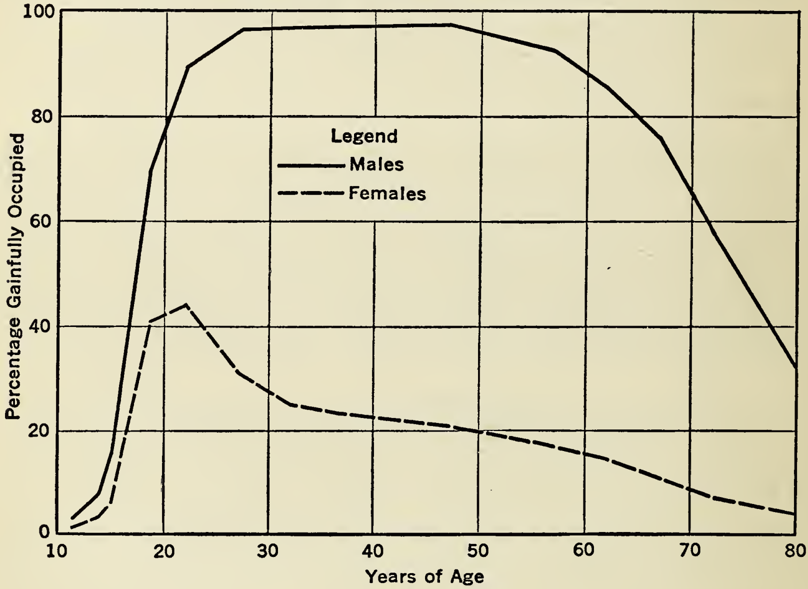
[5] *Ibid.,* p. 30.

CHART III

Percentage Males and Females in the various age groups, who were gainfully occupied, in the United States, in 1930*



Some notion of the relative importance of household production may also be obtained from the proportion of families maintaining independent households. The maintenance of an independent household, except in high-income groups, usually entails considerable direct production by the members. In the United States, in 1930, 97.6 per cent of the total population was living in private families. Monroe found that in 1920, 92.6 per cent of

* Source: Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Vol. V., p. 115.

the Chicago families, having the marital ties of husband and wife unbroken, were in homes of their own; only 3 per cent were boarding and lodging. The remaining 5 per cent were living with relatives or in the homes of their employers.[6] In the same year, Nienburg found that 92 per cent of unbroken families in Rochester were maintaining independent homes. For unbroken families with children, the proportion was 95.3 per cent.[7] For the country as a whole, the proportion of families in homes of their own is likely to be even higher than for these two cities.

The number of workers and the great proportion of people maintaining independent homes are ample proof that, in spite of its decreasing importance, household production still plays a large part in providing consumers with the goods and utilities desired.

HOURS SPENT IN "HOMEMAKING" ACTIVITIES

Recent studies of the homemakers' use of time have greatly increased our knowledge of the productive work of the household. From a large number of families in several states there have been secured detailed weekly records, first, of all activities carried on by the homemaker and, second, of the time spent in "homemaking" by other members of the household. These studies have dispelled, at least partially, the notion that the modern housewife is a lady of leisure. The data available to date are largely representative of medium-income farm and village families.[8] These groups include at least one-third of all families in the United States.

Homemaking as defined in these studies excludes all tasks connected with the home which are not commonly carried on by town women. Vegetable gardening, dairying, care of chickens have not been included even though the products were used by the family. Flower gardening is homemaking, but vegetable gardening is not. Picking peas is farm work but shelling peas is

[6] Day Monroe, *Chicago Families,* Chicago (1932), p. 64. This study included every thirtieth white family in Chicago.

[7] Bertha M. Nienburg, *The Woman Home-Maker in the City,* a study of statistics relating to married women in the city of Rochester, N. Y., at the census of 1920. Bureau of Census (1923), pp. 13 and 17.

[8] H. Kneeland, *Survey,* LXII, p. 302.

TABLE VIII

The Average Number of Hours and the Percentage of Time Spent on Various Homemaking Activities by All Workers: (A) 288 Farm, 71 Country Non-farm, 61 Village, and 93 Town and City Families in Oregon; (B) 559 Farm, 134 Country Non-farm, 115 Village, and 155 Town and City Families in a Number of States*

Activity	Group	Average time per week†								Percentage of total time spent in homemaking			
		Farm families‡		Country non-farm families		Village families		Town and city families		Farm families	Country non-farm families	Village families	Town and city families
		hrs.	min.	hrs.	min.	hrs.	min.	hrs.	min.				
Meal preparation and clearing away	A	27	03	24	50	26	28	22	15	44.3	39.8	42.6	34.4
	B	26	51	24	27	24	58	22	25	44.1	39.8	41.0	35.5
Care of house	A	12	17	12	37	13	06	12	42	20.1	20.2	21.1	19.7
	B	12	47	12	58	12	05	12	18	21.0	21.1	19.8	19.5
Laundering	A	6	18	6	28	7	44	6	10	10.3	10.4	12.5	9.5
	B	6	10	6	15	6	27	7	01	10.1	10.2	10.6	11.1
Sewing and mending	A	4	48	5	41	4	41	5	13	7.9	9.1	7.5	8.1
	B	5	50	6	15	6	30	6	39	9.6	10.2	10.7	10.5
Care of members	A	4	26	5	48	6	05	9	10	7.3	9.3	9.8	14.2
	B	4	33	5	54	5	07	7	59	7.5	9.6	8.4	12.6
Managerial§	A	1	50	2	26	2	42	3	27	3.0	3.9	4.4	5.3
	B	2	25	3	04	3	09	3	53	4.0	5.0	5.2	6.2
All other	A	4	20	4	34	1	19	5	40	7.1	7.3	2.1	8.8
	B	2	18	2	29	2	36	2	57	3.8	4.1	4.3	4.7
Total	A	61	02	62	24	62	05	64	37	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	B	60	54	61	22	60	52	63	12	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

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* Source: (A) Maud Wilson, unpublished data, (B) Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Dept. Agri., unpublished data.

† The time per week includes that of paid workers as well as time spent by family members.

‡ Farm families are those living in the open country whose main occupation is farming. Families living in villages or towns whose main occupation was farming were included in the village and town groups. There were only two or three of these.

§ "Management" as defined in these studies included purchasing, recording, supervising, and other management.

homemaking. This classification partly accounts for the close similarity of time spent by town and farm families as revealed by these data. It should be recognized, however, that the time spent by the town women in purchasing peas and caring for them before shelling may be about the same as the time spent in picking peas.

Data on total time spent and its distribution among the various homemaking activities for several groups are summarized in Table VIII. The average for all groups studied was over 60 hours a week. If we assume arbitrarily that 50 hours are a full working week, homemaking in these households claimed the time of one and a fifth workers.

Meal preparation, care of the house, laundering, sewing, and mending are still the important household tasks. Approximately 36 per cent of the working time for town and city households, and 44 per cent of the time for farm households, were given to meal preparation and clearing away. Care of the house, which included cleaning, care of the fire, water supply, and care of the house surroundings, occupied approximately one-fifth of the total time. The time spent on the care of children may appear somewhat small, but many of the families reporting had no small children. Moreover, much of child care is incidental to other tasks, and a part of it no doubt was included in the leisure time of the members. Time given on active duty to children is not a complete record of child care; the same is true of management.

Routine tasks are most important of all. Wilson estimates that 72 per cent of the time spent by Oregon farm homemakers in homemaking activities was spent in meals, daily and weekly cleaning and straightening, care of fires, laundry, and mending.[9]

THE SHARE OF THE MEMBERS IN HOMEMAKING TASKS

These studies also show who does the household tasks. We are not surprised to find for the families studied that by far the most important worker is the housewife. The average time spent at homemaking tasks by both farm and non-country non-farm homemakers was 51 hours per week. Kneeland found that the

[9] *Use of Time by Oregon Farm Homemakers,* p. 16.

average time spent in homemaking by the women in cities from 2,500 to 50,000 was 51 hours per week. For the large cities of 50,000 and above, the average was a little over 48 hours. On the average these groups of city homemakers received approximately 10 hours' help.[10] Oregon farm homemakers studied had on the average 9.5 hours' help per week and the town group an additional 2.5 hours. Two-thirds of the farm group had less than 10 hours' help a week.

Children were the most important source of help in Oregon families studied: "Half the farm homemaker's help was that of children—4.6 hours a week. That from husbands averaged 2 hours. . . . Help given by husbands was greatest in families where the children were all under 6 years of age—3.6 hours a week. . . . Farm children of grade school age contributed on an average 3.3 hours, those of high school age, 5 hours per week apiece. Town children of these ages averaged 3.2 hours and 4.1 hours respectively." Farm children also share in many farm activities such as gardening, care of chickens, and dairying. Hence their working hours are probably considerably longer than those of town children. During the summer months the children spend much more time at household tasks than during the school year.[11]

It is of interest to separate time spent by members from that of paid workers. The facts concerning 442 Oregon farm and town families are shown in Table IX. It is apparent that for these families paid help was unimportant. Few families had paid workers, and their contribution even in households where they were employed was a small part of total time. In town families the average contribution by family members where there was a paid worker was only one hour less per week than where no paid worker was employed. It is likely that paid workers were often hired only when the burden of housework was very great. As a result, the housewife who was assisted worked on the average just as long as the average woman who had no paid help. Her full working week might also have been due to the fact that the assistance of a paid worker led to more tasks being added, for example, more sewing or canning.

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[10] *Survey,* LXII (1929), 302.

[11] Oregon Exp. Sta. Bul. 256, pp. 23-31.

Farm households present a striking contrast. When a paid worker assisted, family members spent about 8 hours a week less in homemaking tasks than when no paid worker was engaged. In many cases the paid worker may have been hired to do housework in order that family members could care for chickens, do gardening and other tasks.

The importance of help was not the same for all tasks. With the farm group studied by Wilson little help was given in mending, sewing, and purchasing (other than food). Help given in care of fires, dishwashing, and food purchasing was relatively more important. The homemakers usually did not assume responsibility for the water supply.

TABLE IX

WEEKLY TIME SPENT IN HOMEMAKING IN 442 OREGON HOUSEHOLDS, CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO PAID WORKERS EMPLOYED*

Households	No paid help			Paid help employed						
	Number of households	Av. time of all workers		Number of households	Av. time of unpaid workers		Av. time of paid workers		Total time all workers	
		hr.	min.		hr.	min.	hr.	min.	hr.	min.
Farm............	282	60	52	6	53	08	15	29	68	37
Non-country, non-farm...........	122	60	40	32	59	26	15	24	74	50

* M. Wilson, unpublished data.

LABOR-SAVING CONVENIENCES

Present-day household production cannot be understood apart from the equipment with which the housewife has to work. Two things are of interest. First, what proportion of families have labor-saving conveniences, that is, live in houses that are arranged to reduce steps and are provided with good storage facilities. Second, what proportion have central heating, running water in the kitchen and bathroom, and such other labor-saving devices as a power washing machine, heated power-driven ironer, electric vacuum sweeper, ice or electric refrigerator. We would also like to know what effect these labor-saving devices have on the labor necessary for separate tasks and on total time spent in homemaking tasks.

No systematic study has been made of existing house arrangements and storage facilities. From observation, we know that many houses are far from satisfactory from an efficiency standpoint. In a group of 195 farm families studied by Cannon, the age of 176 farm houses was reported or could be accurately estimated. Forty-nine per cent of these were built 85 or more years ago and 83 per cent were 45 or more years old.[12] Only 12 per cent were less than 35 years old. New York farm homes probably represent an extreme situation. In Iowa, homes are not so old. Yet approximately one-third of 14,000 farm homes in 10 Iowa counties surveyed in 1934 were aged 50 years and over.

How Much Labor-Saving Equipment?

Information concerning labor-saving equipment in homes is meager. Some of it is, however, very illuminating. The census of manufactures allows us to glimpse, for example, the increasing number of homes supplied with washing machines, and vacuum cleaners. For farm families the census of agriculture secures information on two very important items, namely, electric lights and running water. In addition a few scattered studies provide other interesting details.

The biennial census of manufacture reports the output of certain pieces of household equipment. The output of electric washing machines for household use from 1927 to 1929 was sufficient for 1 family in every 12, in 1930, to have an electric washing machine which was not more than 3 years old. Factory output was sufficient for approximately 1 family in every 18, in 1930, to have had an electric refrigerator (or a unit installed in its ice cabinet) which was not more than 3 years old; and in the same year 2.3 per cent of all families probably had a domestic electric range not more than 5 years old.[13] The output of vacuum cleaners from 1923 to 1929 provided enough to supply one for

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[12] *The Family Finances of 195 Farm Families in Tompkins County, New York, 1927-8,* Cornell Agri. Exp. Sta. Bul. 522, p. 55.

[13] The biennial census of manufactures every other year reports the output of these electric appliances. The output for the intervening year was estimated as the average between the preceding year and the succeeding year.

28 per cent of all families in 1930. Not all of these vacuum cleaners, however, went to homes. Factories, stores, and hotels took many.

TABLE X

Estimated Number of Electrical Appliances in Active Service in the United States, 1931*

Appliance	Total	Percentage of families having
Vacuum cleaner	6,415,000	21.5
Washing machine	4,925,000	16.5†
Refrigerator	2,569,000	8.6
Range	952,000	3.2
Ironing machine	560,000	1.9

* Totals were taken from data supplied by the National Electric Light Association. In estimating the percentage of homes having equipment, it was assumed that in 1931 the number of families was the same as in 1930. Population increase from 1930 to 1931 was only 0.7 per cent. Owing to depression conditions, many families had doubled up so that the number of families probably did not increase. See also *Electrical Merchandising,* January, 1932, pp. 26–9.

† In a study made by the *Milwaukee Journal,* it is estimated that in 1931, 61.1 per cent of all families in Milwaukee possessed an electric washing machine. See *Consumer Analysis of Greater Milwaukee Market,* 1931.

TABLE XI

Labor-Saving Facilities Available to Certain Families in Cities, Towns, and Villages of Various Sizes in the United States, 1926*

Size of community	Percentage of families having							
	Public garbage collection	Water piped into house	Gas	Stationary bathtub	Stationary kitchen sink	Flush toilet	Electric lights	Electric iron
Under 1,000	10.1	52.7	3.6	26.1	42.7	26.3	72.1	49.2
1,000 to 2,500	17.3	87.3	11.9	40.6	57.1	44.2	77.3	55.0
2,500 to 5,000	39.9	97.2	34.4	51.0	66.6	61.0	77.3	57.0
5,000 to 10,000	48.9	100.0	74.0	61.0	72.3	72.3	79.3	58.9
10,000 to 25,000	56.3	100.0	95.6	66.9	79.1	78.1	78.6	61.2
25,000 to 50,000	88.4	100.0	98.8	70.5	81.5	80.8	78.4	60.2
50,000 to 100,000	88.1	100.0	100.0	74.5	79.9	85.7	77.0	54.7
Over 100,000	95.3	100.0	100.0	75.5	93.7	90.3	81.5	67.8

* Source: Unpublished survey by General Federation of Women's Clubs (1926). See H. Kyrk, *Economic Problems of the Family,* p. 5.

Estimates of the total number of electrical appliances in active service in homes have been made by the National Electric Light Association. Interesting data concerning the more expensive pieces of equipment are shown in Table X. According to this estimate, vacuum cleaners are most common.

In 1926 the General Federation of Women's Clubs made a study of important household facilities. Both urban and rural families were studied. A great many families were included in different parts of the country. They probably had on the whole, however, incomes well above the average. The findings for city, town, and village families are shown in Table XI and those for farm families in Table XII. Clearly shown is the fact that con-

TABLE XII

Labor-Saving Facilities Available to Certain Farm Families, in the United States, 1926*

Equipment	Number of farm homes reporting	Percentage of these having equipment
Cooking fuel		
Kerosene or gasoline	35,960	34.5
Gas or electricity	35,960	7.1
Food storage		
Electric refrigerator	35,118	0.5
Ice refrigerator	35,118	24.4
Cellar or cave	35,118	26.5
Laundry		
Power washing machine	36,862	24.8
Hand washing machine	36,862	17.5
Electric iron	36,558	20.3
Gas iron	35,022	7.4
Plumbing		
Water piped into house	38,458	47.2
Septic tank or cesspool	36,923	22.0
Flush toilet	40,067	16.6
Stationary bathtub	40,067	21.3
Stationary kitchen sink	40,067	33.3
General		
Electricity	37,885	28.5
Sewing machine	36,333	74.1
Electric vacuum cleaner	38,717	9.1
Screens on house	38,308	86.5
Central heating	36,611	12.9

* Source: General Federation of Women's Clubs, *Farm Equipment Survey* (1926), unpublished data. Information was secured on most of these facts from 46 states.

veniences increase with the size of the community. The contrast between the homes in villages under 1,000 population and on farms is striking; the greatest contrast, however, is between the home in the large city and that on the farm.

Data supplied in the census of agriculture on water and electric lights in farm homes give us some idea of the status of equipment in farm homes as a whole. In 1930, 15.8 per cent of all farms had water piped into the house.[14] In 14 of the

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[14] It is of interest to notice that of the farms reporting in the survey made by the Federation of Women's Clubs, 47.2 per cent had running water. This fact clearly indicates that superior farms tended to be reached by this survey. The status of conveniences in farm homes is being revealed by the nationwide survey launched in December 1933 by the Bureau of Home Economics in Washington. Some preliminary data are already available. Those for Iowa are given in Table XII^a and for Kentucky in Table XII^b.

TABLE XII^a

HOME CONVENIENCES IN 6,242 OWNER AND 7,475 NON-OWNER FARM HOMES, IN 110 TOWNSHIPS IN 10 IOWA COUNTIES, IN 1934*

Conveniences	Percentage having	
	Owner	Non-owner
Water supply and sewage disposal:		
Hand pump in dwelling	31.7	29.5
Piped cold water	31.6	18.5
Piped hot water	21.0	8.8
Flush toilet	22.3	9.7
Bath tub	27.5	13.1
Kitchen sink and drain	59.2	47.5
Septic tank	11.6	4.6
Cesspool	19.8	14.4
Light and heat:		
Kerosene and gasoline lamps	60.7	83.7
Electricity (either home plant or power line)	38.5	26.5
Central heating	39.8	21.4
Refrigeration, laundry and cooking facilities:		
Ice refrigerator	18.5	13.6
Mechanical refrigerator	4.2	1.4
Laundry done out-of-doors	13.8	18.3
Power washing-machine	64.5	55.7
Kerosene or gasoline stove	54.0	49.2
Gas or electric stove	5.1	1.7

* Unpublished data subject to later revision

states, the proportion was less than 10 per cent. At the other extreme were 4 states, i.e., New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, and California, where more than 72 per cent of farm homes had running water. About one-half of the homes having running water also had water piped to the bathroom.

A little over 13 per cent of all farm homes had electric lights. In 18 states, however, the proportion having electric lights was less than 8 per cent, and in 10 states it was less than 5 per cent. On the other hand, in 4 states the proportion having electric lights was above 55 per cent. Many more families had water and electric lights in 1930 than in 1920.[15]

The Effect of Labor-Saving Equipment

One's first impulse is to say, "Of course good equipment reduces time and energy spent in a given task and in homemaking as a whole." But is this true? Good equipment reduces either the time or energy or both which are required to achieve a given standard. Having better equipment may lead, however, to raising the standard or to increasing the volume of production. For example, a power sewing machine may lead to more home sewing, a washing machine to more frequently laundered garments and household linens.

This table is a continuation of Footnote 14.

TABLE XII[b]

CONVENIENCES IN 22,341 FARM HOMES IN 12 KENTUCKY COUNTIES IN 1934*

Conveniences	Percentage having
Hand pump in dwelling	4.2
Piped cold water	7.0
Piped hot water	5.0
Kitchen sink with drain	10.3
Kerosene or gasoline lamps	87.5
Electric lights	9.5
Central heating	7.3
Ice refrigerator	27.7
Mechanical refrigerator	3.8
Power washing machine	6.6

* Source: U. S. Dept. of Agri., press releases, Feb. 27th to March 21st, 1934, subject to later revision.

[15] Fifteenth Census of the U. S., 1930, Agriculture, Vol. II, Part 1, p. 56.

Wilson in her study of time spent in homemaking attempted to measure the effect of "good equipment" on the homemaker's use of time. Two groups of farm homemakers were compared: those that had neither electricity nor modern plumbing, and those that had both. Allowance was made as far as possible for other factors which would make for time differences, e.g., size of family. A summary of the findings is shown in Table XIII. Tasks fall into two categories: (1) those tasks to which the homemaker gives less time if good equipment is available; (2) those tasks to which she gives more time if good equipment is available. When good equipment was used she gave less time to food, cleaning, and washing, and more time to ironing, sewing, child care, and care of house surroundings. The net effect was a reduction in the total time that she spent.

Some reduction in time spent because of good equipment is to

TABLE XIII

THE EFFECT OF GOOD EQUIPMENT ON TIME SPENT IN CERTAIN HOUSEHOLD TASKS BY 124 OREGON FARM HOMEMAKERS WITH NEITHER ELECTRICITY NOR MODERN PLUMBING AND 55 HAVING THESE UTILITIES*

Task	Average difference per week		Total increase or decrease	
	hrs.	min.	hrs.	min.
Less time associated with good equipment				
Preparing and clearing away meals...	2	0		
Routine cleaning and care of fires....	0	40		
Washing..........................	0	40		
Total decrease..................			3	20
More time associated with good equipment				
Ironing..........................	0	25		
Sewing..........................	0	45		
Care of children..................	0	30		
Care of house surroundings.........	0	30		
Total increase..................			2	10
Net decrease..................			1	10

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* M. Wilson, *Use of Time by Oregon Farm Homemakers*, Agri. Exp. Sta. Bul. 256, p. 37. See also M. Wilson, "Laundry Time Costs," *J. H. Ec.* XXII (1930), 735; I. F. Arnquist and E. H. Roberts, *The Present Use of Work Time of Farm Homemakers*, Exp. Sta. Bul. 234 (1929), pp. 26–7.

be expected. One hour 10 minutes represents, however, only about 2 per cent of the average weekly time spent in household tasks by homemakers in this group studied. This is not a marked reduction. There are probably several reasons why it was not greater. When good equipment is available other members of the family probably give relatively less assistance; the housewife may reduce her speed, raise her standard, or add additional tasks. It may be that families that have good equipment may also have more income and hence more funds for domestic service and for making in place of buying. This factor may be more important than the kind of equipment in reducing total time spent in homemaking.

In most families the introduction of better equipment does not at present seem likely to reduce greatly the total working day. Work for most people is a habit. Unless the woman has leisure activities more interesting than any homemaking tasks or can turn her time to gainful work she is likely to continue at household tasks the customary length of time.

CHAPTER V

HOW INCOME, FAMILY COMPOSITION, AND LOCATION OF HOME AFFECT HOUSEHOLD TASKS

Household tasks are not the same for all families. If families are grouped according to money income, size and composition of the family, and location of the home, some striking differences appear.

THE INFLUENCE OF MONEY INCOME

Money income influences household production because it affects a number of things; for example, the labor-saving equipment possible, the things bought rather than made, the paid service used, and the standard of living. In a general way it is easy to visualize the change which would occur in the household production of a family which each year had a higher and higher income to spend. A change would occur in both the total time spent by the members and in the kind of tasks they would perform. As the income rose many goods and services which had been supplied by family members would now be purchased. Burdensome, disagreeable tasks would be delegated to paid workers or improved equipment would be introduced. Some of the time of family members thus freed would at first be spent in elaborating menus and table service, and in making the home more attractive in place of just keeping it clean. As the income rose higher, more and more tasks would be delegated to paid workers, so that in some cases only a minimum of management would remain in the hands of family members.

Since income affects household production in so many different ways a wide variation in tasks carried on by family members is to be expected in a society where family incomes range from poverty level, or less, to a million dollars a year and more. The great bulk of incomes fall, however, within a rather narrow range, thus bringing about a similarity in household production for the majority of households. An estimate has been made of the distribution of family incomes in 1928. According to it 55 per cent of the yearly incomes were less than $2,000 and approximately 91 per cent less than $5,000.[1] Although incomes as a whole have fallen, they are still as unequal as formerly.

If volume of production were measured in labor time alone it might, in general, be said that as income increases the amount of production carried on by family members decreases. Studies have recently been made of use of time by homemakers whose husbands were in the moderately well-to-do business and professional groups. The total time spent in homemaking by such women, living in medium and large cities, was 47.6 and 44.9 hours per week respectively.[2] The average weekly time spent by homemakers in towns in Oregon was 51.5 hours.[3] The Oregon group had on the whole a lower income.

A change in kind of production rather than a change in total time is probably the most important change within certain income ranges. It may be, however, that as much or probably more household production is carried on by family members having a moderate income than by those having a very low income. Cannon, for example, found that among the 195 farm families studied the free time of the housewife decreased with increasing receipts.[4] The ability and hours of labor which produced the money income often have their counterpart in the work of the housewife. Hard work and good management in the farm business may cause the woman to work longer hours. Or an ambitious hard-working man in many cases may seek a wife who has these qualities. Because poverty breeds discouragement shorter hours may be spent at household tasks when income is very low. Discouragement affects family morale and standards of order, cleanliness, food, and clothing.

Low money income also brings with it poor equipment. In

[1] Louis S. Reed, *Ability to Pay for Medical Care,* p. 11. This estimate was made by M. Leven and was based on W. I. King's estimate of distribution of individual incomes for 1918.

[2] President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, Vol. IX, p. 28.

[3] *Op. cit.,* p. 14.

[4] *The Family Finances of 195 Farm Families in Tompkins County, New York, 1927-8,* Exp. Sta. Bul. 522, p. 70.

1930 in Mississippi only 1.5 per cent of farm homes were lighted with electricity and only 1.8 per cent had water piped into their dwellings. In Massachusetts, 62.6 per cent of the farm homes had electric lights and 74.5 per cent had running water. The average value per farm of farm products sold, traded, or used by the farm family in 1929 was $910 in Mississippi and $3,061 in Massachusetts.

Information concerning 22 farms in each of two counties in Minnesota was secured for the years 1920 to 1924. The average incomes available for personal and family expenditure were $1,931 and $1,506 respectively. The proportion of homes having running water and sewage systems was approximately twice as great in the high- as in the low-income county.[5]

The influence of money income on labor-saving equipment in 195 farm homes in New York state is shown in Table XIV. Families with high cash receipts had more equipment than those with low cash receipts. For example, 10 per cent of the families with cash receipts under $750 had running water, whereas 44.7 per cent of families with cash receipts of $2,250 or more had this convenience. Twenty per cent of the families with cash

TABLE XIV

THE RELATION BETWEEN CASH RECEIPTS AND THE POSSESSION OF CERTAIN LABOR-SAVING EQUIPMENT OF 195 FARM FAMILIES IN NEW YORK STATE, 1928*

Cash receipts	Number of families	Percentage of families having					
		Running water	Electric lights	Vacuum cleaner	Refrigerator	Washing machine	Sink drain
Under $750	20	10	0	10	0	50	20
750–1,499	52	13	2	31	4	77	67
1,500–2,249	38	29	13	29	24	74	71
2,250–2,999	29	45	17	38	41	76	86
3,000–3,749	32	44	13	58	32	81	75
3,750 and over	24	51	33	60	28	88	79
Total	195	30	12	37†	21	75‡	69

* Source: Bul. 522, pp. 62–5.

† Ninety per cent of these were hand machines and 10 per cent were power.

‡ Sixty per cent of these were hand power, 30 per cent gas engine, and 10 per cent electric.

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[5] Dwight Sanderson, *Farm Income and Farm Life* (1927), pp. 198-201.

receipts above $2,250 had electric lights, whereas only 5.5 per cent of the families with cash receipts below $2,250 were so equipped.

The equipment of city houses is not likely, in some respects, to vary as much with income as does the equipment of farm houses. In the city, even if the family has quite a low income, it can afford gas for cooking, electric lights, and running water. In some cities the electric iron seems to be equally important in all income groups. At least this was so in Appleton, Wis., in 1931. See Table XV. The low-income group was also quite well supplied with electric washing machines. As the income rose there was only a slight increase in the proportion of families having these. Electric vacuum cleaners and toasters do not appear to be quite so essential. A much higher proportion of families in the $2,000 to $3,000 income group had these conveniences than those whose income was below $2,000. Their importance increased very little, however, as incomes rose above $3,000.

TABLE XV

THE RELATION BETWEEN INCOME AND THE POSSESSION OF CERTAIN ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES OF 1,099 FAMILIES IN APPLETON, WIS., 1931*

Income group	Number of families	Percentage of families having					
		Electric irons	Vacuum cleaners	Electric toasters	Washing machines	Ironing machines	Electric ranges
Under $2000........	431	93.9	69.9	45.1	67.1	1.1	2.3
2,000–3,000.........	196	91.8	92.8	72.6	71.1	3.8	6.3
3,000–5,000.........	231	92.4	96.5	79.2	71.9	13.2	6.4
5,000–10,000........	154	95.1	95.0	79.2	78.0	22.2	12.5
10,000 and over.....	87	95.4	95.5	78.8	77.6	44.2	15.6

* Source: Time, Inc., *Markets by Incomes*, pp. 32–3. Appleton, Wis., has a population of 25,000, and income is fairly evenly distributed.

In this town it would appear that if families had an income from $2,000 to $3,000 they felt they could afford not only an electric iron and washing machine but also a vacuum cleaner and toaster. Electric ironing machines and ranges appear to be much less essential than the other appliances. With higher incomes a much larger proportion of families possessed these pieces of equipment.

The increased use of market goods and commercial services as income rises is a familiar fact. Among representative farm families it was found, for example, that in the lowest income group 80 per cent of the new blouses for boys, between 12 and 14 years, were homemade. In the highest income group, only 10 per cent were homemade.[6]

Laundry is among the first tasks to be turned over to a commercial agency. Cannon found among the 195 farm families studied: "Only 5 per cent of the families with the lowest receipts had any expenses for laundry away from home, and the average expenditure was $1; but for 25 per cent of the families with the highest receipts who reported such expenses, the average amount was $41."[7] The variation in proportion of families sending out laundry and in the average expenditure per year, among wage-earning and low-salaried families studied in 1918-19, is shown in Table XVI. Steadily as incomes rose a larger

TABLE XVI

Percentage of Families Sending Laundry Out and the Average Expenditure per Family of 12,096 Wage-Earning and Low-Salaried Families in 92 Cities in the United States, 1918–19*

Income group	Families sending laundry out	
	Percentage of all families	Average expenditure per family per year
Under $900	43.4	$10.67
$900 and under 1,200	58.8	11.30
1,200 and under 1,500	69.2	14.70
1,500 and under 1,800	74.7	19.26
1,800 and under 2,100	77.5	24.12
2,100 and under 2,500	78.2	28.18
2,500 and over	81.9	29.01
All incomes	69.6	17.91

* *Cost of Living in the United States*, Bur. of Lab. Stat. Bul. 357, p. 454.

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[6] Faith Williams, "Clothing Costs," *Yearbook of Agri.* (1931), p. 148.

[7] Bul. 522, pp. 42-3.

proportion of families sent out laundry. The average expenditure for each family using this service also rose.

Perhaps the most important way by which the family gets rid of household tasks is to hire a domestic worker. Paid workers in the home become increasingly important as the income rises until in a few cases little or nothing is done by family members. They take over tasks formerly performed by members and make possible a higher and more elaborate standard of living. Paid workers are often hired to do the laundering, and the baking of cakes and bread, which, at a lower income level, are done outside the home. Among a group of moderately well-to-do families living in medium and in large cities, the weekly help received by women in homemaking tasks was 30.5 and 36.6 hours respectively. Much of this was doubtless paid. For the group in Oregon towns the average help per week received by the homemaker was 12 hours. It is interesting to note that the average time given to homemaking tasks in the homes of the business and professional groups in cities of 250,000 and over was higher than for any other group studied. At the same time, the average time spent by the homemaker herself was lower than for any other group.[8]

SIZE AND COMPOSITION OF THE FAMILY

Size of family affects household production in two ways. In the first place, the larger the group the longer it takes to achieve a given standard in those tasks which are customarily carried on in the home. Second, since money income does not increase proportionately to the increased number in the family, there is, in large families, usually relatively less money with which to buy rather than make and with which to purchase labor-saving equipment or to hire domestic workers. Since not all family members make the same claims on household labor, composition as well as size is important. An infant under one and perhaps all children under five need specially to be considered in studying the effect of composition of the family.

Except where income is very high, size and composition of the family affect household production considerably; consequently it differs from family to family and also varies throughout the life history of the family. Both these differences will be considered.

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[8] President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, IX, p. 28.

From census data we can get a very good picture of differences in size and composition of present-day families. In Table XVII is shown the percentage of families of various sizes in 1930. At that time 52 per cent of all families had three or less members; about 19 per cent had, however, six or more. The percentage of families having a specified number of children under 10 is shown in Table XVIII. Almost 60 per cent of the families had no children under 10; 22 per cent had two or more. Only 1 in every 10 families had three or more children under 10 years.

TABLE XVII

Percentage of Families Having a Specified Number of Members in Different Types of Communities in the United States, 1930

Persons per family	All	Percentage distribution of families		
		Urban	Rural non-farm	Rural farm
One	7.9	8.0	10.4	5.2
Two	23.4	25.1	23.8	18.3
Three	20.8	22.1	20.2	18.0
Four	17.5	18.1	16.6	16.6
Five	12.0	11.6	11.4	13.3
Six	7.6	6.8	7.3	10.0
Seven	4.7	3.8	4.5	7.1
Eight	2.8	2.1	2.7	4.8
Nine	1.6	1.1	1.5	3.1
Ten	0.9	0.6	0.8	1.8
Eleven	0.5	0.3	0.4	1.0
Twelve or more	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.8
All	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

The average size and composition of families changes slowly, yet marked changes are constantly occurring in individual families. The typical family passes through a cycle: first two adults, then the addition of one, two, three, four, or more chil-

TABLE XVIII

PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES HAVING A SPECIFIED NUMBER OF CHILDREN UNDER TEN YEARS OF AGE IN DIFFERENT TYPES OF COMMUNITIES, IN UNITED STATES, 1930

Number of children under 10 years of age*	All classes	Percentage of families having a specified number of children under 10		
		Urban	Rural non-farm	Rural farm
None	58.8	62.4	57.4	50.7
One	19.2	19.4	18.8	19.1
Two	11.8	10.9	12.3	13.7
Three	6.0	4.6	6.7	8.8
Four	2.8	1.9	3.3	5.0
Five	1.0	0.6	1.2	2.0
Six or more	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.7
All	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

* Children related in any way to the head of the family were counted whether sons or daughters, grandchildren, nephews, nieces, or with other relationships.

dren passing from childhood to adolescence and as adults leaving the home so that the family may once again consist of two adults. The peak of the homemaking load, as affected by the size of the household, tends to come when the wife is between 35 and 45 years of age (Table XIX).

TABLE XIX

SIZE OF HOUSEHOLDS OF UNBROKEN WHITE FAMILIES IN CHICAGO, IN 1920, CLASSIFIED BY AGE OF WIFE*

Age of wife	Average size of household
Under 25	3.1
25 and under 35	3.9
35 and under 45	4.6
45 and under 55	4.2
55 and under 65	3.5
65 and over	2.7
All ages	4.0

* Day Monroe, *Chicago Families*, p. 38.

The average size of the family is then 48 per cent larger than for wives under 25 years.

The changing burden of child care can, to some extent, be pictured from the data given in Table XX. In unbroken families, 43 per cent of the wives under 25 years had no children under 16 years, and 21 per cent had two or more. For wives 25 to 35 years, 24 per cent had no children under 16 years, and about one-half had two or more. After wives reached the age of 45 years there was a sharp rise in the proportion of having no children, and a marked fall in those caring for two or more.

TABLE XX

Number of Children under 16 Years of Age, in Chicago White Families, Classified by Age of Wife, 1920*

Age of wife	Families having specified number of children under 16 years of age					
	None	One	Two	Three	Four	Total
Under 25 years	43.0	35.9	15.8	4.4	0.9	100.00
25 and under 35 years	24.2	25.6	24.7	14.1	11.4	100.00
35 and under 45 years	30.8	18.7	18.3	12.9	19.3	100.00
45 and under 55 years	61.2	18.6	10.8	5.6	3.8	100.00
55 and under 65 years	92.3	5.9	1.4	0.3	0.1	100.00
65 years and over	99.6	0.4	....	....	....	100.00
All ages	41.2	21.6	17.3	9.9	10.0	100.00

* Day Monroe, *Chicago Families*, p. 119. Unbroken families in one- and multiple-family households are included here.

The care of members is naturally the activity most affected by the presence of children. Wilson reports: "The average time per week given to the care of members of the household was found to range from 27 hours, 41 minutes, in 8 households with an average of 5.25 children including all three age groups, to 2 hours, 27 minutes, in 170 households with an average of 1.85 children between the ages of 6 and 14." The proportions of the total homemaking time devoted to care of members were 28 per cent and 4 per cent respectively.[9]

In a study of the work time of farm homemakers in Washington, it was found that the homemaker with children averages close to 8 hours' more time per week in homemaking than the one without children.[10] Wilson estimates that when the average time given by homemakers to a child under 1 year is considered 100.0, that of a child from 1 to 5 is 35.3, that of a child from 6 to 14 is 8.7, and that of a child 15 to 18 is 6.8.[11]

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[9] "Time Costs of Children," *J. H. Ec.* (1930, Oct.), 836. The 3 age groups were under one year, one to five years, and older.

The probable effect on household production of a child under one in the family is suggested by a recent study of the time spent in the care of infants, one year of age and under. "The average daily time given to the 24 infants reported in this study was 6 hours 31 minutes."[12] Mothers caring for children under one either increase their total time considerably or change the character of the household production which is carried on. Certain tasks may be discontinued, standards may be lowered, e.g., in care of house or table service. Other members in the family may share more fully in household production. Probably in many instances all of these changes occur.

Table XXI shows the variation in the time spent in homemaking in Oregon households classified according to the composition of the family. It is impossible in this table to distinguish between the effect of difference in size and difference in composition. Families with young children are also on the average those with most members. The most striking contrast is between families with no children and those with the youngest child under one year. In fact, families with a child under one seem to be almost in a class by themselves. The time spent in homemaking is very much greater than for any other group.

We have already noted the fact that as the size of family increases the time spent in homemaking also tends to increase. This fact is very clearly shown in Table XXII. Longer time is required to prepare meals, to clean the house, to do the washing and ironing and other tasks for the larger group. This increase in time spent is not, however, proportionate to the increase in size of family. In the Rhode Island group studied

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[10] Inez Arnquist and Evelyn Roberts, *The Present Use of Work Time of Farm Homemakers,* Wash. Agri. Exp. Sta. Bul. 234 (1929), p. 16.

[11] *The Use of Time by Oregon Farm Homemakers,* p. 26.

[12] Laura C. Brossard, *A Study of the Time Spent in the Care of Infants One Year of Age and Under,* unpublished thesis, University of Chicago (1930), p. 10. The findings are based on one-week records for 24 babies. See also L. C. Brossard, "A Study of Time Spent in the Care of Babies," *J. H. Ec.* 18 (1926, March), 123-7.

TABLE XXI

THE TIME SPENT IN 442 OREGON FAMILIES IN HOMEMAKING ACTIVITIES, BY ALL WORKERS, ACCORDING TO SIZE AND COMPOSITION OF THE FAMILY*

Classification of households	Number of households	Average persons per household	Average time spent per week	
			hrs.	min.
A. Farm				
All	288	4.17	61	01
Total with children	199	4.83	66	18
No children	89	2.69	49	12
No children under six	105	4.60	63	40
Youngest child between one and six	78	4.98	66	46
Youngest child under one year	16	5.66	81	20
B. Non-country, non-farm				
All	154	4.35	63	37
Total with children	131	4.66	66	01
No children	23	2.61	49	54
No children under six	53	4.52	58	57
Youngest child between one and six	69	4.69	67	46
Youngest child under one year	9	5.25	94	13

* M. Wilson, *Use of Time by Oregon Farm Homemakers*, Sta. Bul. 256, p. 29. See also, J. E. Richardson, *The Use of Time by Rural Homemakers in Montana*, Agri. Exp. Sta. Bul. 271, p. 20.

about 58 hours were spent in homemaking in households of from three to four members and about 87 hours where there were six or more. This relatively small increase in time spent with the increase in number served is due to a number of things. In the first place, it is almost as easy to clean a house for three as for two; an additional member increases but little the time spent in food preparation even though the same standard is maintained. A second reason is that the increased time given to homemaking is, to a large extent, drawn from the housewife's leisure. There is thus a definite limit on the time which can be given. As this limit is approached the standard tends to change: unessentials tend to be eliminated and certain things are bought rather than made.

Table XXII also gives a picture of the relative importance of tasks in households of different sizes. If the proportion going to all tasks is the same whatever the size of the family, we can assume: (1) that the relative economy of serving the larger group is the same for all tasks; or (2) that the possibility of eliminating "non-essentials" is the same in all types of work; or (3) that both of these are at work in such a way as to keep the relative claims on time the same.

For the most part, these data would lead us to conclude that the relative importance of tasks changes very little with increase in size of family. There is a slight but irregular tendency for the percentage of time spent on food preparation to increase with increase in size of family and that spent on ironing, sewing and care of house to decline. The proportion of time spent in washing and in care of members was considerably greater for large than small families. This increase may, however, have been due not so much to increase in size as to the higher proportion of these large families having an infant under one year.

These data are merely suggestive. In order to study the relative elasticity of various household tasks it would be best to select families alike in general composition, so that the influence of size on relative time spent in different tasks could more readily be determined.

Special attention has been given to the influence of size of family on time spent on food preparation. For example, Wilson reports:

> When farm households were grouped with respect to the number of individual meals served, it was found that those including the equivalent of two or three full-time persons, that is serving 42 to 63 individual meals per week, spent 14.2 hours in preparation; those with the equivalent of three to four full-time persons spent 16.2 hours; and those with four to five full-time persons, 17.8 hours. Similar differences were noted in the town groups.[13]

The size of the group is likely to affect the type of food preparation. For the small family the delicatessen shop may be a common source of pies, cakes, and cooked meats. The additional money cost is small. With the larger group, the production of such foods at home may be more advantageous. Moreover, the larger the family the greater may be the claims on money income for other things. In households of two and less than three members, 48 per cent of Oregon farm home-

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[13] M. Wilson, "Time Spent in Meal Preparation," *J. H. Ec.* 24 (1932, Jan.), 13.

TABLE XXII

Percentage of Total Homemaking Time Going to Different Tasks in Households of Different Sizes for 102 Rural Rhode Island Families*

Average number of persons in household during the week	Number of households	Time spent in all homemaking tasks		Percentage of total time spent in										
				All tasks	Food			House cleaning, care fires, and other	Clothing and textiles				Care of members	All Other†
					Preparing meals	Clearing away	Other		Washing	Ironing	Sewing, mending, and fancy work	Other		
		hrs.	min.											
Less than 2...	10	50	40	100.0	20.9	14.8	5.7	23.7	3.9	3.4	13.7	1.5	3.0	9.4
2 to 3.......	26	53	25	100.0	24.2	14.2	5.6	22.2	4.1	3.1	14.8	1.2	3.9	6.7
3 to 4.......	25	58	20	100.0	24.0	17.6	6.3	19.7	4.3	3.9	11.4	.6	7.4	4.8
4 to 5.......	19	68	55	100.0	20.4	15.4	5.8	19.6	5.3	2.9	12.0	.8	12.3	5.5
5 to 6.......	12	71	00	100.0	21.9	15.5	6.1	20.8	4.7	3.2	13.8	1.1	7.6	5.3
6 and more...	10	87	30	100.0	25.3	16.8	7.2	17.4	5.7	2.9	8.4	.4	11.3	4.6
All sizes.....	102	62	39	100.0	23.0	15.8	6.1	20.3	4.7	3.2	12.4	.9	7.9	5.7

* Adapted from Rhode Island Agri. Exp. Sta. Bul. 221. Table A, pp. 28–9. The averages in this table are weighted hence different from those in the bulletin.

† This other includes management, other homemaking, and going and returning.

makers baked none of their bread and 40.0 per cent baked all. In households of six and less than seven, 23.1 per cent baked none and 46.2 per cent baked all.[14]

In some cases, however, baking bread at home may vary inversely with the size of the family. That is, the larger the family the less frequently is bread baked at home. Although greater saving is possible with the large family, increased pressure of work may lead to the use of baker's bread.

A study of laundering among Oregon families shows: "The time given to washing increased with the number of persons for whom it was done. The rate of increase, however, was low. . . . Ironing time increased even less than washing, but the amount of laundry which was put away without ironing was greater in the larger households."[15]

The relative time expenditure for washing in Oregon farm households of various sizes is shown in Table XXIII. On the

TABLE XXIII

RELATIVE TIME GIVEN TO ONE WEEK'S WASHING IN OREGON FARM HOUSEHOLDS CLASSIFIED ACCORDING (1) TO THE NUMBER SERVED AND (2) WHETHER THE HOUSEHOLD INCLUDED A BABY UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE*

Number of persons for whom washing is done	All farm households		Farm households with a baby	
	Number	Relative time expenditure†	Number	Relative time expenditure†
2	38	100		
3	38	119	3	191
4	65	124	2	175
5	56	139	5	194
6	24	151		
7	12	210		
8	7	179		
9	3	142		

* See M. Wilson, "Laundry Time Costs," *J. H. Ec.* 22 (1930, Sept.), 737.

† The time spent on a week's washing for two persons (3.1 hours) was taken as 100. The others were stated as percentages of this.

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[14] Bul. 256, p. 40. Among a group of New York farm families reporting in 1928-9 it was found that: "The size of the household was clearly associated with the purchase of bread; generally, small households bought, but large households baked the bread they used." Cornell Exp. Sta. Bul. 561, p. 11.

[15] "Laundry Time Costs," *J. H. Ec.,* 22 (1930, Sept.), 736.

whole the more members there were the greater was the time expenditure. In seven-member households over twice as much time was spent in washing as in the two-member households. This table also indicates the effect of an infant in the family on time spent in washing. For all three-member households the average relative time spent was 119 units; for those three-member households that included a baby it was 191—an increase of more than 60 per cent.

To understand fully the effect of size of family on household production it must be borne in mind that large families are more frequent in the low- than in high-income groups. Monroe, in a study of Chicago families, found: "Few of the women with large families or households were wives of men in the two highest-income groups—the men in professions or the executives. Such fortunate women numbered only 5 per cent of those having households of five or more, and only 4 per cent of those having households of seven or more members." The writer goes on to say: "Apparently the women best able to pay for labor-saving devices and for servants are those who needed them least, from the standpoint of the number of persons for whom meals had to be prepared and cleaning and all the other tasks of home-making done."[16]

The fact that labor-saving equipment does not increase with family need is brought out in Cannon's study of New York farm families. Eighteen per cent of the households of two or less members, and only 10 per cent of the families of seven and over, had hot and cold running water. Of the households of two members and under, 72 per cent had a washing machine and 32 per cent a vacuum cleaner; in households of seven and over, 76 per cent had washing machines and 29 per cent vacuum cleaners.[17]

LOCATION OF HOME

The mechanized apartment in a congested city and the remote farm house represent two extremes. Between these are farm households close to markets and those having many modern conveniences, village families only one step removed from the farm, suburban families with gardens, and families living in detached houses in large cities. Until comparatively recent years the farm household predominated. But in 1930 approximately one-quarter of the population were living on farms, about 56 per cent in urban centers of which approximately 25 per cent were places of 100,000 or more, and 12.3 per cent in places of a million or more. (See Table XXIV.)

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[16] D. Monroe, *Chicago Families*, pp. 263-4.

[17] *Op. cit.*, pp. 62 and 66.

TABLE XXIV

Percentage of the Population in Various-Sized Cities and Rural Communities, in the United States, 1930*

Community	Percentage of total population
Urban	56.2
Places of 1,000,000 or more	12.3
250,000 to 1,000,000	11.2
50,000 to 250,000	11.4
10,000 to 50,000	12.6
2,500 to 10,000	8.6
Rural	43.8
Incorporated places of 1,000 to 2,500	3.9
Incorporated places under 1,000	3.6
Rural-farm	24.6
Other rural	11.8

* Fifteenth Census of the United States 1930, *Population*, Vol. I, p. 14 and Vol. III, Part 1, p. 6.

Some differences in the productive activities of rural and urban households are due only indirectly to location. They are in part the result of differences in size and composition of families. The rural family is larger with more children. In 1930 the median size of the family in urban communities was 3.26 and in rural-farm communities 4.02, the rural-farm family being on the average approximately 23 per cent larger than the urban family.[18] Fifteen per cent of urban families had six or more members while 29 per cent of rural-farm families were this size. (See Table XVII.)

The difference in the number of children to be cared for is even more marked than the difference in size of family. The number of children under 5 years per 1,000 women 22 to 44 years of age married, widowed, or divorced is quite a good measure of child care responsibilities. The differences for various communities in 1920 for native white women are shown in Table XXV. It would appear that the larger the city the lower is the burden of child care. The proportion of children in rural communities is 76 per cent higher than in cities over 100,000 in population.

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[18] Fifteenth Census of the United States 1930, *Families,* p. 3.

TABLE XXV

CHILDREN UNDER 5 YEARS OF AGE PER 1,000 NATIVE WHITE WOMEN 20 TO 44 YEARS OF AGE, MARRIED, WIDOWED, OR DIVORCED IN COMMUNITIES OF DIFFERENT SIZES IN THE UNITED STATES, 1920*

Community	Number of children per 1,000 women	Indexes (ratio of children to women in cities over 100,000 taken as 100)
Cities over 100,000 population	512	100.0
Cities 25,000 to 100,000	554	108.2
Cities 10,000 to 25,000	608	118.8
Cities 2,500 to 10,000	646	126.2
Rural districts	899	175.6

* Source: Census Monograph, *Ratio of Children to Women* 1920, pp. 109–10.

In 1930 the number of children under 10 years per 1,000 women, 15 years old and over, married, widowed, and divorced, was 633 for urban communities and 1,060 for rural-farm, the urban being 40 per cent lower than the rural-farm.[19] Only 7.3 per cent of the urban families and 16.5 per cent of the rural-farm families had three or more children under 10 years. The rural-non-farm group in every case occupied an intermediary position. (See Table XVIII.)

Apart from differences in size and composition of the family, productive activities of farm, village, and city households are influenced greatly by: (1) proximity to market, (2) opportunity families have for providing for themselves, and (3) household conveniences.

The rural housewife does not find the same overflowing market as does her urban sister.

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[19] *Ibid.*, Population, Vol. III, Part 1, pp. 14, 15, and 19.

TABLE XXVI

Laundry Facilities Used by Homemakers in Various Communities*

Group	Percentage using			
	No outside laundry service	Commercial laundry	Laundress outside the home	Both facilities
Farm homemakers	87.4	9.1	3.3	0.2
Other country homemakers	77.4	18.1	4.5	
Village homemakers	84.8	10.7	4.5	
Homemakers in cities of 50,000 to 250,000 population	33.3	56.5	6.2	4.0
Homemakers in cities of 250,000 and over	31.5	59.5	5.4	3.6

* Source: Bur. of H. Ec., U. S. Dept. of Agri. See Pres. Conf. on Home Building and Home Ownership, Vol. IX, p. 64.

Satisfactory food and clothing are more dependent on home activities. In a study of trends in sewing, O'Brien found that the proportion of women making certain garments declined in every instance as the size of community increased.[20]

> In a sample study of over 1,000 homes in 1930 it was found that two-thirds of the farm households used baker's bread only—three-quarters of the village homes and nine-tenths of the city homes used baker's bread only. One-fifth of the farmers' households used homemade bread only, while only about one per cent of the urban homes did.[21]

Studies of the use of laundry facilities reveal some interesting differences between rural and city homemakers. See Table XXVI. Among farm homemakers studied, 9.1 used the commercial laundry, whereas in cities over 250,000, 59.5 per cent did so.

Production by farm households varies considerably with the degree of isolation. Thus in Knott County, Kentucky, typical of many parts of the Appalachian Highlands, among 227 families studied, one-half were doing their own shoe repairing, two-thirds were making quilts, three-quarters soap, and one-fifth brooms.

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[20] *Present Trends in Home Sewing,* U. S. Dept. of Agri., Misc. Publication 4, p. 5.

[21] *Recent Social Trends,* Vol. I, p. 664. Data supplied by the U. S. Bur. H. Ec.

A few were still using the spinning wheel, weaving fine woolen blankets and coverlets, and a few were making furniture. Churning, canning, pickling, drying fruits and vegetables, and butchering were activities of every home.[22]

Variations in household production because of location are partly due to differences in opportunity which families have for providing for themselves. On the farms and in villages, families can if they so desire produce their own milk, cream, butter, eggs, and many fruits and vegetables. In addition meat and fuel can be provided on most farms. With these opportunities open to her, the housewife is not so likely to add so many frills to her food and clothing standards.

Even though it is possible for farm families to provide themselves with milk, butter, eggs, etc., they do not always do so. Desire for variety in consumption is partly responsible. Moreover, the recent trend in production has been toward increased specialization on the farm as well as in industry. As a result families in dairy sections have commonly made very little butter at home. The cream or milk goes to the creamery, and butter is purchased. Right here is a serious question confronting the farm family. Should they attempt, as far as possible, to raise for themselves the things they need or should they concentrate on money income? The first insures greater security and probably also greater interest in work; the second involves greater risk but the possibility of a larger real income.

The difference in household conveniences such as gas, electricity, water supply, and sewage disposal is the third major reason why production by farm households is different from that of city households. Carrying fuel and ashes for kitchen stoves, pumping and carrying water, cleaning oil lamps are common tasks. The census of 1930 reports water piped to 15.8 per cent of the farm dwellings and into bathrooms in only 8.4 per cent, and electric light in 13.4 per cent.[23] In large cities, there are relatively few families without these.

Among the Oregon families studied, 36.8 per cent of the farm, and 3.2 per cent of the non-country non-farm families, depended on kerosene lamps; only 28.1 per cent of the farm families, as contrasted with 95.4 per cent of the non-country non-farm, had electricity. Sixty-eight per cent of the farm homemakers used only a wood stove for cooking, whereas only 45 per cent of the non-country non-farm group were so equipped. Only 6.3 per cent of the farm homes had electric vacuum cleaners, and 43.5 per cent of the non-country non-farm homes were supplied with such.[24]

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[22] Faith Williams, "Family Living Standards Depend on Use as Well as Size of Income," *Yearbook of Agriculture* (1932), pp. 549-51.

[23] Fifteenth Census of U. S. 1930, *Agriculture,* Vol. IV, Part 3, p. 56.

Differences in activities between urban and rural households are shown in Tables VIII and XXI. According to these the town and city families spent slightly more time in homemaking activities than farm families. With reference to the Oregon families Wilson, however, states: "When differences in the make-up of the households are considered farm homemakers averaged two hours a week more time in their homemaking than the non-country non-farm group." In contrasting the records of farm and non-country non-farm families, it is found that the time spent in the care of the house, in laundering, sewing, and mending is approximately the same for each. But more time is given by town and city families to management, which included marketing. For the farm households 18 minutes per week was spent in food purchasing and 66 minutes for total purchasing; for the non-country non-farm group 30 minutes per week was spent in food purchasing and 2 hours and 25 minutes for total purchasing.[25]

Often the difference in time spent on a certain task by rural and urban housewives is not as great as might be expected. The time spent in meal preparation by the Oregon group of farm households averaged 17.3 hours per week. Country households in which the chief occupation was other than farming averaged 16.0 hours per week. The average for a group of village, town, and city households was 15.2 hours. The influence of somewhat higher income and closer proximity to the market made a difference of only 18 minutes per day between farm and urban households. Wilson suggests two explanations: (1) that rural and urban households perhaps do not differ greatly in the use of commercial facilities that reduce the time given to meal preparation; (2) that the more commercial facilities are used, the higher becomes the standard of meal preparation and service.[26]

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[24] M. Wilson, *The Use of Time by Oregon Farm Homemakers,* p. 36. Some of the differences in equipment used in rural and city homes were brought out in surveys of home equipment made by the General Federation of Women's Clubs in 1926. See Chapter IV.

[25] M. Wilson, unpublished data.

The average time spent in the care of members of the family, as shown in Table VIII, was higher for the town and city families than for the farm. This difference is due in part to the higher proportion of town and city families having children. When farm and town families having the youngest child under one year are compared, it is found that town families spent on the average over 13 hours a week more in homemaking than did farm families. These town families were also smaller than the farm families. (See Table XXI.) Some of the difference may perhaps have been the result of the greater care and attention which urban children must be given if they are to have satisfactory recreation. In the city the child's play time often requires much more supervision than in the country. On the other hand, country children often have to be taken to school.

Some interesting differences are apparent in the time given to certain activities. In the Oregon families, for example, for every 10 hours given to regular washing, farm families spend 5.7 hours and town and city families 7.4 hours at regular ironing. Town and city families were slightly larger and had more children, but these figures seem to indicate that ironing is relatively more important for town and city households than for farm families. Since fewer farm than town families have power and running water it may be that 10 hours of washing on the farm does not result in as many articles to be ironed as 10 hours of similar labor in town. Or it may be that farm garments are simpler and more easily ironed, or that the standard of clothing is such that a lower standard of ironing is acceptable. Certainly less time is usually spent on a farmer's than on a bank clerk's work shirt. In addition on the farm more articles may be put away unironed, because of different community conventions or the longer average working day for the woman on the farm. Although the town woman spends as much time as the farm woman at homemaking, her total working week is shorter.

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[26] M. Wilson, "Time Spent in Meal Preparation," *J. H. Ec.* XXIV (1932, Jan.), 13.

Production by farm and urban households will probably become more similar as improved roads bring farm households in closer touch with markets and enable merchants to ship goods at a lower cost. Certain differences will be wiped out as electrification of farm homes continues. But even after these changes have occurred it seems likely that certain differences will persist. There is evidence that the birth-rate will continue to be higher for rural than for urban families. The range of farm incomes being less than city incomes, extremes in household production among farm families will not be so great. The farm family will continue to produce more food even though the suburban movement continues. Women share in this farm work. As a result a part of the woman's time is drawn away from homemaking tending to prevent to some extent an elaboration, for example, of standards of food preparation and serving and of clothing and its care. Social contacts in the town and city also stimulate this elaboration. Then too farm and city families do not seem to have the same attitude toward saving. The delegation of household tasks calls for money expenditure. If saving seems very important the family tends to retain certain household tasks. Farm savings are largely reinvested in the farm hence are a more tangible and probably a greater source of joy and satisfaction to the family than the somewhat impersonal investments of the city family. The need for additional savings to improve the farm is ever present. The need for better household equipment or for buying in place of making may be ignored.

SEASONAL CHANGE

Homemaking tasks vary with money income, with size and composition of the family, and with place of home. They vary also with the season. Seasonal changes are to be expected in such tasks as canning, care of fires, cleaning, and care of house surroundings.

The Oregon farm families, reporting in September, spent almost five hours a week on food preservation; in March they spent only three minutes a week. July was the peak month for extra cleaning. From March to July care of home surroundings was important. December and January are the months for fancy work. More time is given to mending at this time also. Purchasing for the household for other than food had three peaks, i.e., June, September, and December.[27]

The time spent in homemaking in farm homes is likely to vary more from season to season than does that in cities. For one thing, certain seasonal tasks such as canning are likely to be more important. The size of farm households is likely to be larger in summer than in winter. Then, too, the farm woman's responsibility in gardening, care of chickens, and dairy changes with the seasons. The changes in time spent in homemaking and in farm work for a group of Washington farm women are shown in Table XXVII. During spring and winter the hours spent in homemaking were relatively short. In spring it was due to pressure of farm work. In the winter the demands of homemaking as well as farm work were light.

TABLE XXVII

THE AVERAGE TIME SPENT IN HOMEMAKING AND IN FARM WORK BY 137 WASHINGTON FARM WOMEN DURING DIFFERENT SEASONS*

Season	Number of records	Hours spent in		
		Homemaking	Farm work	Total
Spring	18	51.3	15.1	66.4
Summer	59	54.2	9.9	64.1
Autumn	32	54.0	8.6	62.6
Winter	28	50.5	7.8	58.3
All	137	53.0	9.9	62.9

* I. F. Arnquist and Evelyn H. Roberts, *The Present Use of Work Time of Farm Homemakers*, Bul. 234, 1929.

NEED FOR FURTHER STUDY

Recent studies have contributed much to our knowledge of present-day household production. The data are not, however, representative of either low- or high-income groups; and they do not adequately represent middle-class families in large cities. Nor do they show how "homemaking" in an apartment differs from "homemaking" in a detached house. One wonders too if there are not some important sectional differences, between Alabama and Iowa for example, or New York and Kentucky; or differences due to national origin. Even though total time spent is the same there are undoubtedly important differences in quality and kind of production.

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[27] Oregon Exp. Sta. Bul. 256, p. 31.

Furthermore, attention has been confined to typical weeks. What are "non-typical" weeks like? One wonders if by leaving out "non-typical" weeks seasonal differences can really be discovered. "Non-typical" weeks may occur most frequently in busy times.

Although attempts have been made to secure a random sample, one wonders what bias was introduced by the effort which had to be put forth in keeping the records. The poor managers and homemakers overburdened for any reason were not so likely to co-operate as the good managers or those having some "free time."

Then too little is known of efficiency in performance or quality standards. How much dawdling or "killing time" on the job occurs? How true is the statement that "the average American home is notoriously ill-kept"?[28] If inefficiency exists, to what is

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[28] Studies of child care indicate the quality of performance in this task by certain families. A study of 6,015 children of preschool age in Gary, Ind., furnishes striking evidence of need for better physical care of many young children (Lydia Roberts, *Nutrition Work with Children,* Chicago, 1927): "Every home in the city where there was a child between two and six years of age was visited by a trained worker and information obtained as to diet, hygiene, and general living conditions of the children. In addition, medical examinations were made of 3,125 of the children studied" (p. 328).

In speaking of the findings of this investigation Roberts says: "Judged by accepted standards of what constitutes a diet capable of promoting normal growth in children, the large majority of the children were not being adequately fed" (p. 329). There was a very high proportion of physical defects which might be laid to the nutritional deficiencies. Only 4.8 per cent of the children were free from defects; only 18.6 per cent were classed as being in excellent nutritional state; 41.8 per cent had defects of the bony and muscular system; 14.9 per cent had defects which were the result of rickets; 25.4 per cent had postural defects; 64.7 per cent had decayed teeth. At the same time milk and vegetables, which are the chief sources of bone-building materials, were conspicuously lacking in the diets of the large majority. Among the Gary children practices in respect to eating were likewise poor. "Only 3.4 per cent of the children had meals suitable to children; 61 per cent had a 'heavy' evening meal; less than half had meals it due? Absence of standards? Ignorance of the best methods of performance? Lack of supervision? Or some other factor? The answering of these questions awaits further investigation.

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at regular hours; and eating between meals was an almost universal practice. . . . At least one-third had totally inadequate breakfasts or none at all; 16.9 per cent had no lunches or distinctly poor ones, as one cup of coffee and several cookies; and 8.2 per cent had neither adequate lunches nor breakfasts" (p. 330).

Facts concerning the sleeping habits of the children were also secured: "Eighty per cent of the 6,015 children were having no daytime naps or rest periods; and they were not sleeping longer hours at night to compensate" (p. 328).

A study has recently been made of rural child life in selected areas of Iowa (Baldwin, *et al., Farm Children,* New York, 1930). "Problems of diet, often of a minor character but sometimes of a more serious nature, were revealed in almost every examination of preschool children" (p. 186). In regard to the older preschool children it was found: "Conscientious though some mothers were about the food given their babies, few mothers gave great attention to the diet of children more than two years old. These children ate their three daily meals with the family. They found bread, meat and potatoes filling and satisfying, and if they did not care for green vegetables little effort was made to popularize this essential part of the diet. Pastry, particularly cake and pie, was on the table at least once a day. Its wholesomeness and digestibility seemed taken for granted, since its composition involved the use of fresh eggs, rich cream, and country butter" (pp. 187 and 192). The investigators found that "most mothers were philosophic regarding childish ailments. They believed such diseases as mumps, chicken pox, whooping cough and measles were inescapable and made no effort to guard against them. Regularity of habits was not stressed in most homes, resulting in feeding difficulties and bowel disorders. Care of the teeth frequently was neglected, and in homes where older children were taught the need of such cleanliness, often no effort was made to care for the teeth of preschool children" (p. 298).

The quality of care and training received at home can be judged partly by the child's development on admission to school. White, director of the Merrill-Palmer School, says: "From the physical standpoint, the handicaps presented by the children who are entering school certainly offer convincing evidence of the necessity of supervision and attention to health during the preschool period" ("The Importance of the Early Years," *Intelligent Parenthood,* p. 85). Woolley says: "Every kindergarten teacher knows how many children enter school with various types of defect which seems to indicate that the home has not been doing as good a job as it might in providing either for the physical welfare or for the training and education of children up to the age of five" ("The Nursery School," *Concerning Parents,* p. 49).

CHAPTER VI

HOW FAMILY STANDARDS AND OTHER FACTORS AFFECT HOUSEHOLD TASKS

If you were to ask the first woman you find busy at household tasks why she is making biscuits rather than buying them, or polishing silver, or waxing floors, or caring for children rather than hiring someone to do these, the response might be: "Oh I have always done it," or "John likes my biscuits," or, "I would not trust the silver to anyone else." Or the woman might reply, "It saves money and there are so many other things to pay for."

STANDARD OF LIVING

A family's standard of living consists of the goods and services which the members consider essential. It affects household tasks in three ways. In the first place certain goods considered essential must be purchased. The more there are of these the less income will be available for such things as the hiring of domestic workers or the purchase of ready-to-serve food and ready-to-wear clothing. Secondly, the desire for a certain quality in cakes, ironed table linen, polished silver, for example, determines the labor required and may also prevent the purchase of commercial substitutes. For example, with an elaborate standard of food and clothing goes a high labor expenditure for these tasks; a simple standard calls for less labor. Fine table linen may be desired too precious to be entrusted to a commercial laundry or to such paid workers as are available.

The third way in which a family's standard of living affects household tasks is somewhat different. Family standards not only prevent tasks being delegated; they may also have quite the opposite effect. They may prevent their being carried on by the members. The family may like commercial bread and doughnuts better than homemade or ready-to-wear garments better than those made at home. The milling of grain, for example, is within the technological possibilities of the household if the coarser quality were acceptable. The cost of cereals, especially in farm homes where the grain used is raised, could thereby be reduced. Furthermore, the family may consider that a paid worker is absolutely necessary for certain tasks. In order to afford this service some goods may have to be made rather than bought. For example, garments may be constructed at home rather than purchased ready-to-wear in order to provide money to pay the laundress.

You meet a person on the street, visit in his home, eat at the family table, discover what household tasks are performed, the care and attention various things receive, and bit by bit the effect of family standard on production is revealed. Even within one community in the same income group for families of like size and composition marked differences occur in the order, cleanliness, and beauty of house and furnishings, in variety of foods on the menu, in the simplicity of food preparation and garment construction, in table service and house surroundings, and in the training of children. You may find one home where order is continually maintained; the whole house expresses to you that here at least is "a place for everything and everything in its place." In the house next door the magazines and papers of the past four months are stacked high on the end of the couch; under it are the children's toys, and the mending basket is full. Here is a home where the two-year-old child is slipped into a simple pair of rompers in the morning and is dressed for the day. Next door the mother is mortified if her child of the same age is not always spotless, even though each day two or three or even four fresh and carefully ironed dresses are necessary. In one home in spite of the fact that food and table service are simple guests are welcomed and little additional preparation occurs. In another guests are a burden because of the extra labor entailed. Homes with beautiful flower gardens and well-kept lawns exist side by side with those where no care and attention are given to surroundings.

What Determines Family Standards?

A family's standard of living is the result of many influences. Habit is important. Women continue to prepare and serve food in the same way, and the family to like certain foods because they are accustomed to them. Custom and habit often cause a task to remain, either because of failure to evaluate the changed situation, because of unwillingness to modify one's habits, or because of a sentimental attachment to the home product.

Family, race, and community traditions dictate some of the essentials. In most families it is customary for the child to be cared for in the home during all his twenty-four hours at least until he goes to kindergarten. Some women consider anything else unsatisfactory. Those who delegate child care to paid workers frequently meet the opposition of other members of the family and of the community as well. The desire to conform, not to be thought queer or careless of one's home duties, prevents a departure from customary ways. At times individual standards do prevail even though the community is outraged.

Long are the hours of labor devoted to "keeping up with the Joneses." The more conspicuous the consumption the more emulation is likely to affect it. In some homes, a visit from the teacher or preacher is the occasion for much display on the table and in the order and cleanliness of home and children. In social clubs, the serving of tea or supper becomes a competition in which each woman seeks to outdo preceding hostesses in novelty of salads and desserts, ornateness of sandwiches, and variety of cakes. Rules must often be established to restrict such competition. Prestige, the desire to maintain one's standing in the community and to avoid being known as a sloppy housekeeper, will influence some women even in the cleaning of attics and tidying of closets where no eye but the family's is likely to see. No woman can escape relentless community criticism which is often sympathetic, in few cases vicious, but always never-ceasing.

Education plays an important part in determining standards. Knowledge leads to a change in what the family considers essential; and it reduces the influence of custom. Education may bring about a general raising of the standard entailing more labor; or it may lead to a re-evaluation of household tasks: a simplifying of some in order to make more time available for others, or a change in the standard to allow for more time for leisure. It is of interest that Wilson found that the time spent in care of members varied directly with school training of homemakers. With an increase in formal education the homemaker gave more time to care of children. The net difference between the elementary and college group was about one and a half hours a week when difference in the number and ages of children was taken into consideration.[1]

Sales pressure has many important effects on standards which in turn directly or indirectly influence household tasks. It may stimulate the desire for certain market goods which could not be produced by the family. If money income goes to these there may not be enough funds to hire a domestic worker or pay a laundry bill. Or advertising may bring the family to believe that the commercial product is better than the homemade and certain purchases may be curtailed to allow for its purchase. Another type of advertising affecting standards is that suggesting new foods to be prepared at home, charming garments that can easily be constructed using commercial patterns, materials, braids, and other accessories.

Family standards are by no means constant. They change greatly throughout the life history of every family; as it passes from two adults to a group with young children, then adolescent boys and girls, and later to an adult group once more. Standards also change as the worker passes from a young woman full of strength and vigor to an older woman. Standards tend to be modified in accordance with what is possible. Neither the family as a whole nor individual members in the family, nor yet the community, expects the same standard in household tasks from a young woman as from an old, nor from a woman with children as one without. The social life of the family, entertainment in the home, varies greatly with the age of the children and probably reaches a peak when the boys and girls are in their teens, and is at its lowest point when the parents are old. When the children are small the standard of house care and table service is likely to be very different from the standard later when they are in high school.

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[1] M. Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

An Appraisal of Standards

Once one begins comparing the standards of various families he unconsciously finds himself describing them as high or low, good or bad, desirable or undesirable. Different standards or bases of judgment exist in the minds of those who appraise family standards.

For many household tasks there is what, in Home Economics, is known as a standard or a perfect product. In this product every detail is correct according to some scientific, esthetic or conventional standard. There are well-defined standards for bread, cakes, pies, table service, laundered garments and household linens, waxed floors, polished silver, and dusted rooms. Standards for family menus and for bridge teas, except as they relate to nutritional needs, for type of clothing children should wear, and for the arrangement of furniture, for example, are not, however, so well defined. But nevertheless there is a perfection standard in the mind of many people which they use as a basis of judging family standards and rating them high or low.

There is, however, another way of judging standards that seems much more important than the degree to which they approach perfection. Standards may be looked upon as desirable or undesirable, being evaluated in terms of life situations. To do this the benefits derived must be compared with the sacrifice involved in making them possible. A desirable standard may be one which holds that dishes are quite satisfactory when unwiped, that absolute cleanliness of curtains and floors is not necessary, that whenever possible garments should be simple to minimize care at home and make it easier to secure satisfactory substitutes, that good nutrition is the only absolute standard which must be met in menu planning.

Many examples can be found where the sacrifice of recreation or needed rest, or participation in community activity seems far to outweigh the advantage derived from spotless floors, well-pressed clothes, delectable cakes and pies. Here is a family whose income increases. The mother continues to do the laundry. Why? The son pays $10 for his shirts and, "The laundry would ruin them." The mother in the case is well past sixty.

Standards for "perfect products" have been set up for individual things. If the housewife sets out to achieve these she may lose sight of the consumer. A home in which perfect and continued order and cleanliness prevail may be a very unsatisfactory place in which to live. Sometimes the worker's desire for perfection makes her forget that order and cleanliness are only worthy ends if they make the home more pleasant for the family.

Many are the criticisms of present household standards. In some homes higher standards for many tasks are needed. The housewife's judgment of her own standard may be faulty. She may, for example, pride herself on the care and supervision of her child, but the child's freedom may be unduly restricted. She may be an excellent cook and consider her meals above reproach, but the family may be dyspeptic because of too many cakes, pies, and rich sauces. What some families need is a lower standard in some tasks permitting higher standards in others, or more time for leisure.

THE ABILITY TO PERFORM TASKS

On the whole the greater the skill required to do a task the greater is the tendency to turn it over to a specialized worker. As a result men's stiff collars are usually the very first articles to go to the commercial laundry. Men's and boys' clothing is more frequently purchased than women's and girls'.

As complicated machinery and specialized labor have accustomed us to products outside the scope of household production simple products formerly used are no longer satisfactory. For example, few families consider home-knit stockings acceptable.

The natural resources available and the equipment possessed, or economical to purchase, also determine what production will be carried on. At present many families are so located that it is practically impossible for them to grow their own vegetables, and provide themselves with eggs, butter, milk, and meat.

Menus planned by social agencies must often take into account the fact that some families have no oven. The possession of the necessary equipment, for example, a churn or an electric washing machine and ironer or sewing machine, may result in more production being carried on by the household group.

The skill possessed by certain family members influences greatly the quality of product provided, and also whether the family or a paid worker shall do a given task. The man who is skilled in "manual training" is more likely to do the general repairing of house and furnishings, and the woman who can construct a garment with ease to do the home sewing, than they would if their ability in such productive processes were undeveloped. The increase of public education in technical training will no doubt tend to increase somewhat the volume of household production in certain lines, although the declining number who receive such training at home tends in part to offset the influence of the schools.

General efficiency in production and ability to organize are important. They account for some striking differences in food preparation, cleanliness, and order of the home.

Sometimes the production of a good is quite within the ability of a family without their being aware of it. For example, furniture polish, floor wax, and silver polish may easily be made from recipe, at a relatively large saving; yet these are customarily bought. Buying rather than making may be due to some extent to the fact that the preparation of the wax and furniture polish is mussy, or that for the amount usually bought at one time the saving is small. But it is also due in part to custom. When it is customary to buy the practice is apt to continue, since the householder's knowledge is largely derived from customary practice. Development of skill is not needed here so much as information about the possibilities of home production. Advertising has of course in most cases built up an exaggerated notion of the superiority of the branded product.

THE WILLINGNESS OF FAMILY MEMBERS TO PERFORM TASKS

Why are families willing to do things for themselves? Perhaps the first impulse of the majority of readers is to reply: "Because it saves money." But this is only a partial explanation. Time and energy costs, the pleasure derived by the worker from the task, and the extent to which she finds the task fatiguing, boring, or in any way burdensome or disagreeable are also important.

The saving of time and energy becomes particularly important if the worker desires to have time and energy freed for other purposes, for rest, recreation, community activities, or paid work. So long as a task entails no sacrifice, the time and energy given to it will not be considered. Cakes and salads whose preparation calls for hours of careful work tend to be customary only in a society where pressure in housewife's time is relatively light. The greater the importance attached to free time, the more critically will household tasks be examined, will desires be modified, the least important omitted, and those representing the least saving delegated.

After her study of Oregon families Wilson concludes: "It is likely . . . that work days are as long as they are partly because there are available no uses for leisure which would be as interesting as certain aspects of the homemaker's job."[2] Fancy work, which was included with other tasks in the time spent in homemaking, is largely recreational. So also are a good many other types of work. "In response to the query, 'What use would you make of an extra hour in your day?' more than a third of the Middletown working class group of women questioned answered blankly 'I don't know.' "[3] Under such circumstances desire for leisure time is not an active factor causing the household manager to evaluate her tasks. Fortunately not all homemakers are at a loss as to how additional time might be used.

In most instances the more burdensome the task because of the time or the physical energy required, or the more disagreeable the work, the greater will be the desire of the worker to be freed. A paid worker is frequently brought in to do the scrubbing and the heavy cleaning even though the homemaker may spend her time at other tasks netting a much lower return per labor hour. If a task can be made less burdensome, requiring less physical exertion, or can be carried on in more pleasant

[2] *The Use of Time by Oregon Farm Homemakers,* p. 45.

[3] R. S. and H. M. Lynd, *Middletown,* p. 310.

surroundings, or be made less time-consuming, it is more apt to be retained. The introduction of labor-saving machinery, e.g., the electric washing machine, the vacuum cleaner, has helped to retain such tasks as washing and rug cleaning as a part of household production. Without these machines the tasks would more generally be performed by commercial agencies.

A task may be disliked because of the physical exertion involved, the monotony due to daily occurrence, or the mussy character of the work. A group of Oregon homemakers reported on tasks they disliked and those they found fatiguing. Among the farm women laundry, especially washing, ranked highest in fatigue and dislike; cleaning and straightening was a close second on dislike and also came second in fatigue. Dishes were third in dislike but very low in fatigue rating. Among the town women, cleaning and straightening ranked highest in dislike but this was probably due to the fact that more of their laundry was sent out; laundry stood highest in fatigue, however. Dishwashing was very much disliked by this group also.[4] One hundred and eight rural women in Rhode Island rated cooking then care of children as greatest preference, and cleaning then dishwashing as the least.[5] However, some of the tasks most disliked or most fatiguing are not easily delegated.

The attitude of a worker to a task is compounded of many things. Social prestige plays an important part. Some homemakers consider it beneath their dignity to perform certain household tasks, e.g., certain types of cleaning. Past habits, and the social customs and conventions of the group of which they are a part, influence attitude.

Community customs may force a woman to give up certain tasks or to perform others quite against her own inclinations. In most southern states it is customary for moderate-income families to have domestic servants. A northern woman moving south wished to continue her former practices, doing her own work using labor-saving conveniences. But community opinion was so strong that she had to hire servants to clean, cook, and care for the children. This occurred even though many times

[4] Oregon Exp. Sta. Bul. 256, p. 46.

[5] Rhode Island Exp. Sta. Bul. 221, p. 24.

the workers hired seemed hopelessly inefficient, the sanitary condition of the kitchen was far below the woman's standard, and the worry and fatigue of management were greater than if she had done the tasks herself. Yet, if she were to make any pretence at social standing, she had to conform in this matter. Some farm women who attempt to reduce working hours by buying eggs and vegetables may find the disapproval of the community so great that vegetable gardening and chicken raising are given a place in the family work schedule.

Advertising is partly responsible for present attitudes to household tasks. Borsodi says:

> It is to be hoped that social historians will not underestimate the part which advertising has played in creating the folkways of the period through which mankind is at present passing. For the placing of a social stigma upon home-baking . . . has been largely accomplished by advertising. . . . In spite of what modern kitchen ranges and modern kitchen implements have done to reduce the labor involved in home-baking, the advertising of the baking industry, with the cumulative repetition of one idea millions of times, has made her [the modern woman] feel that home-baking is drudgery. In this way advertising has built into the mental habits of women one of those great transvaluations of values which profoundly change the social history of mankind.[6]

To offset such advertising is that which extols the joys of housework when efficient equipment is used. Everyone is free to speculate concerning the effect of both types of advertising.

The worker as far as possible turns from tasks she dislikes. But there are some which are a source of real pleasure. In such cases time and energy costs and even money saving may be overlooked. Different tasks offer a varied physical, mental, and emotional appeal. Pleasure derived from a task is a highly individualized thing, depending on skill and training, and on the response of the group to the worker's contribution.

Management is among those tasks which greatly appeal to workers. It is frequently a means of self-expression for the members who share in it; and through it they gain a sense of control. The housewife may desire to have things done her way merely as a symbol of her authority. The craft interest is apt to find expression in such tasks as home canning and preserving, in food preparation, garment construction, and "fancy work."

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[6] *This Ugly Civilization,* pp. 90-1.

Tasks may also be included in household production because of the opportunity afforded for child training and education. Gardening, poultry raising, cleaning, and other tasks are frequently assigned to the members not primarily because of the money thus saved, but because of the educational opportunities afforded.

SUBSTITUTES AVAILABLE AND THEIR COST

Purchase and household labor are the principal ways by which the family secures goods. Before a family will change from purchasing to making, or vice versa, certain minimum quality standards must be met. The greater the skill and training required, the less likely is the household worker to produce satisfactory goods. Children's clothes are more frequently made by the homemaker than the clothes for the adult members of the group because they are made in simpler styles and are more easily fitted and are less likely to appear homemade.[7] The more complicated is the pattern for a garment and the harder the material is to work with, the fewer women are found making the garment at home.

Oregon farm homemakers were asked why they did not send out all their laundry. Eighty-three per cent replied that it cost too much; 29 per cent that there was no commercial laundry available; 32 per cent replied that either the work was poorly done or the laundry hard on clothes. A lower proportion of town and village homemakers had no laundry available, but a larger proportion considered the service unsatisfactory.[8] These facts would seem to indicate that the passing of laundry from the home depends not only on higher money incomes but also on better facilities at lower cost.

The ease with which substitutes may be provided for goods commonly produced by the household varies greatly. The Volstead Act stimulated the production of home brew. But in few cases is state interference important. In general if a good lends itself to mass production, is durable, can be readily standardized, and the standard is accepted by the mass of the people, then it is probable that it will be relatively unimportant in household production, since it is likely to be available on the market at relatively low cost.[9] If, on the other hand, the good is perishable, or does not lend itself to mass production, or the individual does not desire the standardized good but one adapted or adjusted to his particular needs or desires, it will tend to have a place in household production, provided it is within the technological possibilities of the household. Borsodi, in pointing out the advantages of household production, or at least of small-scale production, says:

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[7] "Homemade" has come to have a derogatory implication when applied to clothes even though it is still a term of recommendation for food products.

[8] M. Wilson, "Laundry Time Costs," *J. H. Ec.* XXII (1930), 739.

> Under such conditions eccentricity was no luxury. Personality could be catered to because individual taste was not penalized. Being made individually and not serially, the products could be varied in size, in quality and in design to suit the maker or consumer without materially affecting the actual cost of production. But none of the economies of mass production, mass distribution and mass consumption is possible if the finished product is permitted to vary in this manner.[10]

Home manufacture continues in some cases because the market does not provide a variety from which to choose. In the study of home sewing by O'Brien over 50 per cent of the women giving reasons for home sewing stated: "Homemade garments more nearly meet individual needs." The higher the income the greater was the proportion of women giving this as their reason. Where the income was high the saving of money did not matter so much as better quality, and this the women felt could best be provided by the home product.[11]

[9] This has been brought out in a recent study of "Homemade and Readymade Garments for Infants," by A. B. T. Williams and Adella I. Eppel, *J. H. Ec.*, XXI (1929), 183-5. In conclusion the writers state: "In general, the garments in the layette in which the design and material are standardized are also the cheapest to purchase ready-made and the ones least profitable to make at home."

[10] *This Ugly Civilization*, pp. 186-7.

[11] *Present Trends in Home Sewing*, p. 9. Among Oklahoma farm women F. Fernandes found: "Forty-seven per cent reported that they bought ready made clothing to save time and energy. Five per cent said 'ready made clothing was as cheap or cheaper than that made at home.' However, generally speaking, the

Attention to detail, including the adjustment of method to the individual product, is, in a large part, responsible for the home laundering of many fine garments and household linens which might be damaged by standardized methods which frequently accompany mass production. In a study of laundering made by the Bureau of Home Economics it was found that: "A higher proportion of families reported laundering of women's hosiery and underwear and of men's hose than of other items of clothing, and of tablecloths and napkins than of sheets, pillowcases, or towels. . . . Silk and rayon garments were more often laundered by a member of the family than cotton garments."[12] Even in families with incomes between $5,000 and $10,000, the majority of families reported that the laundering of women's and girls' dresses, underwear, and hosiery, and men's and boys' hose was done by a member of the family.

The group desires to buy services as well as goods; the difficulty experienced in securing satisfactory services depends on the character of the task to be delegated. It is usually difficult, for example, to secure a substitute for management. Such a task calls for a superior worker. Even where the cooking and the cleaning may be delegated, management is apt to be retained because of the high grade of labor required.

There is another reason why the greater part of management continues to be done by family members. The manager must be one who from association has an intimate knowledge of the standards and specific demands of individual members. It is largely through small decisions that the concept of the needs and desires is worked out. In few cases is there sufficient consciousness of the whole scheme of household life to describe it at any one time. In the high-income groups close economy is not important, so the problem of choosing specific goods can largely be delegated to a paid worker. In moderate- and low-income

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standard of the last group was not particularly high. Their clothing was characterized by bungalow aprons, overalls and work shirts." Oklahoma Agri. Exp. Sta. Bul. 197 (1930).

[12] Edna L. Clark, "Who Does the Laundry?" *The Starchroom Laundry Journal* (Oct. 15, 1928). This study was carried on in the summer of 1927. Eight hundred and twenty-two women each reported how her family laundering was being done; and 168 self-supporting women described what was done with theirs. Communities of various sizes were represented.

groups waste from decisions not in accord with the desires of the group might have dire consequences. The intimate knowledge which comes from household association leads to a better adjustment of ways and means to needs and desires.

Finding a satisfactory substitute for household production is determined in some measure by the relation which certain production must bear to the time and place of consumption. Some production must be carried on at the place of consumption and some at the time of consumption. Personal service, a part of the food preparation, the serving of food, dishwashing, and the care of the house and furnishings are included in these categories. Since the production must be done in the house, it is likely to be done by a member of the family even though the worker dislikes the task. The home is private, and to some extent isolated; the production is small scale. So unless the task calls for a considerable degree of skill and special tools, as is the case, for example, with some electrical and plumbing repairs and some types of house decoration, or is particularly laborious, as is some of the cleaning, that production which must be done within the house is apt to be done by the family. Many foods can be prepared outside the home and brought in. The number for which this is true is limited greatly by our present methods of handling food. Light-weight, non-bulky, heat-conserving containers might increase the number of ready-to-serve meals. The Institute for the Coordination of Women's Interests at Smith College, and other organizations, have attempted to demonstrate ways and means whereby meals ready-to-serve may be provided for families in their own homes. Experiments of this kind have not yet met with much success. For the majority of households, the final preparation of food must take place in the home if the desired quality is to be made available. The high cost of these ready-to-serve meals has been a factor preventing their more widespread use.

Custom both in the home and business plays a part in the ease with which a substitute may be procured. If tasks have been customarily performed by the household, commercial or other agencies to which the task might be delegated are relatively undeveloped. At the present time it is difficult, for example, to find, at a satisfactory price, workers to whom child care can be entrusted. It may be that in the future such workers will be available at least for medium- and high-income households.

Major changes come slowly, yet every week some new good appears on the market which affects household customs. When biscuits baked in the home were wanted it was customary, until very recently, to mix the ingredients at home. Now ready-to-mix and ready-to-pop-in-the-oven biscuits come from the corner grocery. An increasing array of salads, desserts, cold meats, pastries, and cakes are appearing in delicatessen shops, and new foods and combinations are being canned. Canned Irish and sweet potatoes, canned hamburg steak with the accompanying vegetables, and canned strained vegetables for babies are a few examples which suggest a modification of our customs.

The relative money cost of producing a good at home and procuring it in the market influences families greatly. Comparatively few families have incomes so large that saving of money is not considered. If the money saving is important and no value is placed on time, household production is apt to be carried on so long as the direct money cost of household production is less than the cost of a satisfactory market substitute. When the saving in dollars and cents is small, the difference in money cost is apt to be overlooked even though the percentage saving may be relatively large.

For some types of work the money saving is large. Other tasks are added as fillers because the woman is not free to do other things which she may consider very worth while.

It is necessary to look at the nature of the time demands of the various household tasks in order to see why tasks serving as fillers are important. Some tasks call for only a certain number of hours and minutes. In other cases, e.g., the final preparation and serving of a meal, the time must be given during a definite period. The tasks are spread out and cannot be concentrated into a limited part of the day. The worker must often remain on the job, because her free period is too brief for assuming other responsibilities. As a result if the family consider it essential for the children to be cared for by one or more of the members of the family, other tasks are apt to be added, as much of the time necessary for the care of children need not be given exclusively to this. Meals prepared at home may be desired. Washing and weekly cleaning may be added to make a full-time day.

CHAPTER VII

HOW THE GAINFUL WORK OF WIVES AND MOTHERS AFFECTS HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION

With marriage come customary housekeeping duties. These duties many people believe have prior claim in the woman's time and interests. Consequently they feel that any gainful work which interferes with them in any way should be discontinued. Such people will probably agree with the writer who says: "Responsibility for providing income should rest upon the head of the family, and upon the other partner, in the undertaking of creating a home, falls primarily the responsibility of keeping the hearth-fires burning."[1] Most families perhaps look upon this as an ideal to be achieved, and social reformers at times insist that "Woman's place is in the home." The fact must be recognized, however, that married women are more and more engaged in gainful work, much of which takes them away from the home many hours in the day. Every increase in gainful work leaves less time and energy for household tasks and leisure.

In our study of household production we must consider: (1) the extent to which married women are engaged in gainful work; and (2) how the performance of this gainful work affects household production.

HOW MANY WIVES AND MOTHERS EARN?

In answering this question it is well to think of women in two groups: Among the first are those whose main occupation is gainful employment. They are listed by census as gainfully occupied. In the second group are those who are primarily engaged in housekeeping. For them, gainful work is not a regular or main source of income. Some of these work irregularly or for only short periods in factories, offices, shops, and schools. Among those earning but not counted as gainfully employed are women on farms responsible for poultry and dairy work and helping at times with other farm tasks. There are also women helping in their husbands' shops, or aiding other members of the family with gainful work; and women at home sewing, baking, or writing for pay, or earning a little money through caring for boarders and lodgers.

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[1] W. F. Green, "The Husband's Wage," *Survey* (1926, Dec.), 280.

In 1930, 11.7 per cent of the married women in the United States were listed by the census enumerator as gainfully employed. In urban communities the proportion was higher. For example, in 21 out of the 97 cities in the United States having a population of 100,000 or over, 19 per cent or more of the married women were gainfully employed.

The 1930 census is unique in that homemaking has been recognized as an occupation. A "homemaker" has been defined as that woman member of the family responsible for the care of a home and family. In 1930, 13.8 per cent of the homemakers in the United States were gainfully employed. In urban centers the proportion was 16.4 per cent, and in rural-farm communities 8.8 per cent.

Studies of certain groups throw further light on the extent of gainful employment among married women. Among unskilled laborers in Chicago in 1925, for example, working mothers were reported in 23 per cent of the families. Approximately 28 per cent of these women worked 52 weeks in the year; and 53 per cent more than 32 weeks. In this study keeping of boarders and lodgers was not included as gainful work.[2]

In Philadelphia in 1928 a house-to-house canvass was made of 12,227 families having one or more children under 16 years. It was found that 23 per cent of the *mothers* were employed.

> The families canvassed lived in different parts of the city in 11 districts especially selected as typical of the industrial neighborhoods of the city as a whole. They constituted a fairly representative cross section of the city's wage-earning population as to race and nativity. . . .

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[2] L. Houghteling, *The Income and Standard of Living of Unskilled Laborers in Chicago,* p. 61.

> One-third of the mothers had had some kind of gainful employment during the year preceding the interview, and approximately half had been employed at some time since their marriage. Many had worked during the greater part of their married lives, some throughout the period, and fully one-fourth of the working mothers had been employed at least half their married lives. While, as might be expected, relatively more mothers had gone to work whose husbands were dead or were for some reason or another away from home than mothers whose husbands were at home, the husbands in the great majority of families in which women worked were at home with the family at the time of the survey.[3]

In 1930 a study was made of Iowa State College graduates in home economics. Thirty-five out of the 99 women reporting stated that they contributed to the family income other than by housework in their homes. The average number of hours per week spent in gainful work was 23.8, or about three working days per week.[4] Teaching, farm work, such as raising chickens and gardening, and keeping lodgers were the most important kinds of work.

Keeping boarders and lodgers is a very common method by which women may continue their customary household production and still add a little to the money income. Approximately 10 per cent of all families in the United States in 1930 had one or more lodgers.[5]

Special studies of census data for certain cities reveal the extent to which boarders and lodgers are in homes where the women are not listed as gainfully employed. In four selected cities in 1920 gainful work was the main occupation of 17 per cent of the married women. An additional 10 per cent were caring for boarders and lodgers as supplementary to homemaking.[6] In Rochester in 1920 only 325 women were listed in the census as boarding and lodging-house keepers; yet 11,845 women who were or had been married were taking boarders and lodgers and thus contributing to money income. Undoubtedly many women were doing other types of gainful work of which the census provides no record.

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[3] U. S. Dept. of Labor, *Sixteenth Annual Report of the Chief of the Children's Bureau* (Je. 1928), pp. 15-16.

[4] F. A. Kelly, *Home Conditions of 180 Iowa State College Graduates in Home Economics,* unpublished thesis (1930), p. 24.

[5] Fifteenth Census of the United States 1930, *Families,* p. 26.

[6] Women's Bur. Bul. 41, and U. S. Census 1920, Vols. II and IV.

The gainful work of farm women is especially interesting. Only 8.8 per cent of rural-farm women were listed in the census as gainfully occupied, yet it is probable that the majority of farmers' wives contribute to money income. They do this either by directly assisting other members in money-making projects or by carrying on independent projects of their own. For example, out of 179 Nebraska farm women reporting in 1927 and 1928, 70 per cent made a money addition to the family income through the sale of eggs, poultry, cream, milk, butter, fruits, vegetables, or by some other means.[7]

Poultry raising and dairying are perhaps the ways by which farm women most frequently contribute to cash income. In these two ways a group of 159 Nebraska farm women in 1930-1 by their labor contributed on the average $220.58 in products sold, and used by the family or in increased inventory values. The average monthly time spent in these tasks was 43.8 hours.[8] We might look upon this as approximately five days' work a month.

The same tasks, care of poultry and helping with dairy work, were common also in a Minnesota county in 1924. They were daily tasks for almost every housewife in the county throughout the entire five years that records were kept. For the women who did assist, the average time given per day to farm work was approximately 1½ hours, including Sunday. Four hours daily for farm work is the most time any woman reported.[9] If we accept 8 hours as a standard working day these women averaged 68.5 days a year at farm work.

Twenty-eight out of 53 homemakers on owner-operated farms in Vermont reported cash contributions to the family income from enterprises which they themselves managed. The median for those earning was $100.[10] Poultry raising was most common. Boarders and tourists ranked second.

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[7] M. R. Clark and G. Gray, *The Routine and Seasonal Work of Nebraska Farm Women,* Exp. Sta. Bul. 238 (1930), p. 3.

[8] M. R. Clark, *The Contribution of Nebraska Farm Women to Family Income through Poultry and Dairy Products,* Nebraska Exp. Sta. Bul. 258 (1931).

[9] L. A. Studley, *Relationship of the Farm Home to the Farm Business,* Minn. Exp. Sta. Bul. 279 (1931), p. 14.

AT HOME OR AWAY FROM HOME

If the homemaker's gainful work is carried on at home, household tasks are not likely to be as much affected as if she must go outside the home to work. The employment status of homemakers in the United States in 1930 is shown in Table XXVIII. In urban communities 90.1 per cent of all homemakers gainfully employed were away from home. Over one-half of these were industrial workers, servants, and waitresses. Only 9.7 per cent of the gainfully employed urban workers were at home. The situation of rural-farm homemakers was quite different. Only 27.3 per cent of them were working away from home, and 72.6 per cent at home. Of those at home 69.2 per cent were in agricultural occupations.

TABLE XXVIII

Employment Status of Homemakers in the United States, Classified by Size of Community, 1930*

Employment status	Size of community			
	All	Urban	Rural—non-farm	Rural—farm
Percentage of homemakers gainfully occupied	13.8	16.4	11.7	8.8
Percentage of gainfully occupied homemakers at home	19.4	9.7	15.3	72.6
Agricultural occupations	10.1	0.2	1.5	69.2
Other	9.3	9.4	13.9	3.4
Percentage of gainfully occupied homemakers away from home	80.4	90.1	84.3	27.3
Professional workers	9.9	10.3	12.2	5.0
Office workers	12.8	16.0	9.1	1.0
Industrial workers	18.8	22.4	18.0	2.0
Servants, waitresses, etc.	24.4	27.6	26.0	6.5
Saleswomen	6.9	8.1	7.0	0.9
Other occupations	7.6	5.7	12.1	11.9

* Source: Fifteenth Census of the United States 1930, *Families*, pp. 30–2.

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[10] L. H. Johnson and M. Muse, *Cash Contribution to the Family Income by Vermont Farm Homemakers,* Sta. Bul. 355 (1933).

AGE OF CHILDREN

Age of children influences greatly the place of gainful work. Among Chicago white families about four-fifths of the mothers doing gainful work and having children under two were earning at home. The younger the children the less frequently did mothers go outside the home to work. Fifty-four per cent of the working mothers having children from two to seven (and none younger) and 45 per cent of those having children seven to fourteen (with none under seven) were employed at home.[11] In Rochester in 1920, 21.4 per cent of the mothers with children under five were working but only 4.8 per cent were going outside the home. In the case of mothers with children from five to eighteen years, 25.7 per cent were working and 9.3 per cent outside the home.[12] Gainful work in both the Chicago and Rochester studies included all families having boarders and lodgers even though this work was only supplementary to homemaking.

Among the Philadelphia families studied in 1928:

> The proportion of mothers employed varied directly with the number of children and with the presence of children of preschool age. Mothers of children who require constant supervision and mothers of large families apparently do not go to work in Philadelphia except as a last resort. Nevertheless, more than three-fifths of the mothers employed in the six months preceding the date of interview had more than one child and 18 per cent had four or more. The children were often of an age where they required constant care. Mothers in such families try to obtain work at night or at hours that interfere the least with their duties as mothers.[13]

SIZE OF FAMILY

Homemakers who earned had smaller families than those who did not. Table XXIX suggests the change in gainful work likely to come with change in size of family. Among Chicago white families 26.2 per cent of wives having two-member families earned while 5.5 per cent having families of nine or more were earning. "In families of wives thirty-five and under forty-five, the average number of persons was 3.7, in the earning and 4.6 in the non-earning group."[14] Among these Chicago families there was a higher proportion of childless wives among the breadwinners than among those not gainfully employed.

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[11] D. Monroe, *Chicago Families,* p. 220.

[12] B. M. Nienburg, *The Woman Home-maker in the City,* p. 26.

[13] U. S. Children's Bureau, *Annual Report of the Chief* (1931, Je.), p. 11.

TABLE XXIX

THE PERCENTAGE OF WIVES HELPING TO EARN MONEY INCOME, IN FAMILIES OF DIFFERENT SIZES, AMONG CHICAGO WHITE FAMILIES, 1920*

Number of members per family	Percentage of families where wife earns
All sizes	17.6
2	26.2
3	16.0
4	14.2
5	15.2
6	12.7
7	11.3
8	12.6
Nine or more	5.5
Five or more	13.0

* Source: D. Monroe, *Chicago Families*, p. 147. Included are unbroken families in one-family households. "Wives who earn" consist in this case of those listed by the census enumerator as gainfully employed plus those caring for lodgers as a supplementary occupation.

EARNINGS OF HUSBAND

The gainful work of wives also varies with the income earned by their husbands. The more fully incomes earned by the other members provide the goods which "must" be purchased, the less is the pressure for the women to earn. This fact is apparent even when low-income families alone are considered. Among unskilled laborers in Chicago when the husband's earnings were less than $1,300, 29.4 per cent of the mothers were employed; in incomes above this only 19.8 per cent were employed.[15] Among the families in which the earnings of the chief wage-earner fell below the $1,500 line, 23.5 per cent had boarders and roomers; among those in which earnings were $1,500 or more, only 16.5 per cent had roomers and boarders as members

[14] D. Monroe, *Chicago Families*, p. 11.

[15] *Op. cit.*, p. 54.

of their households. It is also significant that the families having 3 or more boarders and roomers were in groups where the earnings were low.[16]

During one year in New Bedford, Mass., facts about the father's earnings and the mother's gainful work were secured for all families in which a baby was born. It was found that the higher the earnings the lower the proportion of women gainfully employed during the year following the birth of the infant. When the father's earnings were under $450, 61 per cent of the mothers were gainfully employed; when they were $1,050 and above, the percentage of mothers gainfully employed was only 16.[17]

Among Chicago white families having children under 14 years of age, Monroe found that 18.3 per cent of the mothers in the unskilled and semi-skilled wage-earning group were gainfully employed; 10.6 per cent of the professional group; and 8.5 per cent of the executive and officials.[18]

The effect of need for higher money income on women's earning is suggested by the Vermont study already referred to. Sixty-four per cent of those on mortgaged farms contributed to the cash income and only 44 per cent of those on non-mortgaged farms. The average net income of farms where wives earned was $1,416. On farms where wives did not earn it was $1,841. It happened, however, that the wives who earned did not live on the poorest paying farms. The net income of 20 of the 53 farms was less than $1,000. Only nine of the homemakers on these farms made any cash contribution to the income. Furthermore, their average earnings were less than those of the women living on more profitable farms. Two-thirds of the wives living on farms with an average net income between $1,000 and $2,000 earned. Where net income was $2,000 or more, less than half the homemakers earned.

The number of homemakers included in this study is too few for conclusive evidence that gainful work of farm women is less frequent on the low- than the medium-income farms. If this should be a fact there are several possible explanations. The families with low incomes may have more young children; the women may have poorer household equipment. In addition the family standard of living may be lower and the woman perhaps less ambitious. Low money income on the farm does not exert the same pressure on the farm woman to earn as does a low money income in a city. The living from the farm plus money income earned by other members is more likely to be adequate for necessaries, such as food and shelter.

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[16] *Ibid.*, p. 50.

[17] U. S. Children's Bureau, *Infant Mortality, New Bedford, Mass.*, Pub. 68 (1920), p. 41.

[18] *Chicago Families*, p. 218.

The homemaker's share in farm work appears to have increased with the fall in farm income since 1929. Among 53 Vermont homemakers studied in 1928 to 1930 none assisted with the milking. Fifteen out of 75 reporting in 1931 were doing so. Comments lead to the conclusion that since their husbands could not afford to hire help on the farm they were "helping out."[19]

HOW GAINFUL WORK AFFECTS HOUSEHOLD TASKS

When a married woman becomes a gainful worker some change usually occurs in household tasks unless the gainful work is carried on during time otherwise free. Many wives and mothers limit their gainful work to part time in order to avoid overwork or a lowering of household standards. Other members of the family may share more fully in household tasks, more goods may be purchased, or the service of paid workers secured, or tasks left undone.

Perhaps the greatest change occurs where a family gives up its independent home and boards and lodges with relatives, with another family, or in a hotel. This is usually not done, however. In 1920 in 11 selected cities 86.5 per cent of the gainfully employed married women were living at home; only 10.5 per cent were boarding and lodging.[20]

Among professional groups an independent home is usually maintained even though the wife is gainfully employed. Out of 243 college wives gainfully employed only 10 per cent lived in hotels, boarding-houses or institutions; only 29 per cent lived in

[19] Vermont Agri. Exp. Sta. Bul. 355, p. 19.

[20] Census Monograph, IX (1929), p. 128.

apartments. Sixty-one per cent were in separate houses involving the care of yards, porches, and furnaces.[21]

The change that occurs when the woman goes outside the home to work depends upon the presence and age of children, whether other adults are living in the home who can assume responsibility for certain tasks, and also upon the woman's earnings and the total money income of the family. The care of children in her absence is the most important problem facing the mother of young children. It is also the task for which she most frequently has help. In a group of 107 homes of working mothers using outside help, one-third of the help was for general work and two-thirds for child care.[22] A few of these mothers had other members of the family at home who could assume responsibility for the continuous care of children. One-fifth of the Rochester mothers working outside the home and having children under five had another adult in the family who did not go outside the home to work. Fifteen per cent of those with children five years and under eighteen years were so situated.[23]

Where there is no adult in the home a hired worker may come in or the child may be taken to a day-nursery, or be left to the care of a neighbor. More than three-quarters of the children under five of a group of mothers in industry in Philadelphia in 1919 were cared for in their own homes, usually by a person actually living in the household. Some care was provided for all children under five years although in a few cases even for children under one this care was only that of "a neighbor who runs in." No care while the mother was at work was provided in the case of 18 per cent of the children from five to ten, and 47 per cent of those ten to fifteen years.[24] After regular school hours the activities of these children were unsupervised.

Since household tasks apart from child care can for the most part be done whenever the worker has time, the need for assistance in these tasks is not always urgent. The woman herself does much of the housework "after hours." Other members of the family help in their spare time. Only 7 per cent of the mothers studied by Hughes who were working full-time and keeping house were without some assistance in household tasks. One-third kept house with assistance from members of the family and relatives in the household; and more than one-quarter kept house with outside assistance only.[25] Children in many homes bore the brunt of the burden.

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[21] A. B. Kennon, "College Wives Who Work," *J. Am. Ass. Univ. Women,* XX (1927), 102.

[22] G. Hughes, *op. cit.,* p. 172.

[23] B. M. Nienburg, *The Woman Homemaker in the City.* See also, D. Monroe, *Chicago Families,* p. 221.

[24] *Mothers in Industry,* pp. 194-6.

When the woman earns, goods may be purchased rather than made. Hughes says: "Occasionally a mother states that she uses more easily prepared foods now than before she began to work but such a statement is an exception."[26] She also found that 55 per cent of the mothers who worked full time were doing the laundry alone, and only 13 per cent were using outside help. Fewer still had help for general cleaning.

Hughes in describing households where the mother works says:

> Late afternoon calls found her just back from work, preparing supper; evening visits found her cooking, washing dishes, ironing, putting the children to bed. Saturday afternoon she was scrubbing the white marble steps, washing clothes, or marketing. . . . The mother's day begins with the preparation of an early breakfast . . . over 70 per cent of all women who keep house and work a full day prepare breakfast alone. Before the mother leaves the house she must also see that there is something left for the children's lunch, if she cannot come home, and that their clothes are presentable for school.[27]

As income increases so also does paid service. Consequently the arrangements made by a professional woman are likely to be quite different from those of an industrial mother. Among 100 "successful" professional women with children who were studied by Collier only 9 had no servants, and 42 had two or more.[28] The effect of the higher income on paid service is apparent, however, even among industrial mothers. Hughes found:

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[25] *Ibid.*, p. 169.
[26] *Ibid.*, p. 181.
[27] *Ibid.*, pp. 176-7.
[28] *Marriage and Careers*, p. 74.

"The proportion having paid assistance increases steadily as wages grow larger. Only 5 out of 25 women earning less than $5 a week have paid assistance compared with 6 out of 9 who earn $25 or more."[29]

THE STANDARD OF CHILD CARE

The welfare of the preschool child depends almost entirely on home care. Very little is known, however, about the effect of the gainful employment of the mother on child care. In some cases care in homes where the mother is working is undoubtedly very inadequate. The Women's Bureau visited 522 wage-earning mothers in Passaic, N. J., who in 1920 had children under five years, in order to learn what provision was made for their care. The writer concludes: "The care provided seems in great measure to have been casual and inadequate. It is difficult to fix the line of demarcation between the conditions confronting women who said they depended on neighbors to care for their children and those who frankly stated that the children cared for themselves or that 'God took care of them.' "[30]

Certain studies point to a definite relationship between child health and the gainful employment of mothers. Dunlop found, on comparing approximately 5,500 records of working mothers in Scotland with the same number of records of unoccupied mothers, that 24.0 per cent of the children of occupied mothers and only 14.8 per cent of the children of unoccupied mothers were reported to be dead. The child mortality for the children of occupied mothers was 62 per cent higher than for those unoccupied.[31] The correct interpretation of such data is, however, difficult. In many cases where poverty accompanied the gainful employment of the mother, the death-rate might have been even higher if gainful work had not been carried on. Probably also a large proportion of the mothers in low-income families were ignorant concerning adequate care of children and even if they had been at home the rate might have been high.

[29] *Op. cit.*, p. 173.

[30] *Women's Bur.*, U. S. Dept. of Labor, Bul. 41, pp. 136-7.

[31] "The Fertility of Marriage in Scotland," *J. Royal Statistical Society*, 77 (1914, Feb.), 283.

In a recent English study, an attempt has been made to isolate the influence of gainful employment from other factors such as the health and habits of parents. The writer concludes: "When any association exists between the employment of the mother and infant mortality it is very slight in degree; in the majority of districts there is none and this is noticeably the case in those districts where the work is heaviest. When there is an association it is chiefly a secondary result of the presence of inferior stock and if the habits of the parents are made constant the existing correlation between the employment of the mother and infant mortality becomes very small and generally insignificant." The writer also states: "I cannot find any evidence that factory employment of women leads to abnormal confinements or to bad health in the women who work."[32]

Even though health may be maintained other phases of child development may be neglected. That neglect occurs is suggested by the many cases where no special provision was made for the care of the children in the mother's absence. Hughes believes: "The child-care problem of the wage-earning mother is primarily not a question of infant welfare but of late childhood and early adolescence."[33] The older rather than the younger children are the ones neglected. It must be recognized, however, that in many of these homes even when the mother is not gainfully employed much of the children's time outside of school is unsupervised.

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[32] Ethel M. Elderton, *On the Relative Value of the Factors Which Influence Infant Welfare,* University of London, Eugenics Laboratory Memoirs, XXV (1928), p. 207. See also, Woodbury, *Causal Factors in Infant Mortality,* Children's Bureau, Bureau Publication 142 (1925).

[33] *Op. cit.,* p. 194.

CHAPTER VIII

THE HOUSEHOLD IN OUR SYSTEM OF PRODUCTION

If we are to understand household problems and be able to appraise the household's part in our system of production we must consider: first what type of goods families provide for themselves; second what part of the production process they carry on; and third how household production compares with commercial production in scale and degree of specialization.

MATERIAL OR SERVICE PRODUCTION

There are two important ways of classifying goods: (1) on the basis of their material or non-material character, i.e., commodities or services; and (2) on the relation the good bears to consumer's needs, e.g., necessaries, comforts, or luxuries.

A careful distinction between commodity and service production has not in many instances been made. Commodity production is usually discussed at length and an additional statement made that services, as well as material goods, embody utilities. Ely's discussion of service production is representative of the general treatment accorded the subject. He refers to household servants in such a way that one might assume that he considers all household production to be service production. He states: "Goods have been commonly divided into (1) *material things*, such as food, clothes, and books, and (2) *personal services*, such as those of physicians, lawyers, musicians, teachers, household servants, and public officers."[1] The classing of the work of household servants as service production is no doubt due in part to the association of service with servant. But to render a service is to perform an act which benefits another, and may be done either by the production of a material or non-material good.

According to Black, "commodity production represents human effort applied to commodities, whereas service production represents human effort applied to other persons." As examples of the latter production, he cites the "services of ushers, barbers, dentists, physicians and singers." He goes on to say:

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[1] *Outlines of Economics,* 3rd ed., p. 107.

> If this distinction is strictly applied, however, considerable part of what is ordinarily called service production will be ruled out of this class—for example, the services of hotel and train porters, or waitresses, or bootblacks, which are really stored up in things rather than in persons. The period for which they are stored, however, is relatively brief, and the things in which they are stored are so closely associated with the person—clothes, for example—that common usage refers to them as personal service production.[2]

This decision is apparent in his treatment of household production. He writes:

> Much of the production carried on in households is more nearly commodity than service production. Many of the changes created are stored up in the furnishings of the home, in the food being prepared for consumption, and in the clothing being made ready for wearing. But the period of storing is very brief, and the things in which stored highly personal, so that it seems only natural and practicable to accept common usage and call such production service production.[3]

But should all household production be classed as service production? The "relatively brief" period of time during which the utilities are stored does not, in all cases, bear critical analysis. The homemade bread may not be eaten in any shorter time after baking than the bread made in the factory; nor is the length of life of the homemade dress especially short in comparison with one ready-to-wear. It is true that the food cooked and garments constructed within the home are usually made for a particular person or group but so is a custom or tailor-made garment. Just the fact that food is prepared for consumption by unpaid workers or the clothing made ready for wearing, rather than for sale, does not change the type of production carried on. To lump all household production as service production does not seem valid. The goods produced differ widely.

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[2] *Production Economics,* p. 38.

[3] *Ibid.,* p. 42.

Moreover, such a classification is not consistent with that used for market goods.

Let us consider commodity production first. Black has defined it as "human effort applied to commodities." According to this the musician, when playing a violin, piano, or other musical instrument, would be carrying on commodity production, since here human effort is applied to a commodity. The performance of a musician is, however, usually considered to be service production. It seems better to look to the end product, the good produced, in order to discover the character of the activity. When this is done commodity production is best defined as that production where the utilities created increase the want-satisfying power of some material good or commodity. Activities which result in a material good having the form and the time and place sequence desired are accordingly designated as commodity production. Thus stated, commodity production includes the greater part of household production. In some families the woman delegates all cooking, cleaning, sewing, and other manual tasks. If she is still the manager, her management as it pertains to food, clothing, housing, market selection, the care and cleaning of the house, furnishings and clothing, as well as the preparation and serving of food and the construction of garments, is commodity production.

Some service production occurs, however. It is best defined as that production where the utilities are not embodied in material goods. The service good is used as it is produced. There has to be more or less direct contact between producer and consumer, e.g., a mother bathing or teaching a child.

The personal care and training of children and care of the sick and aged are the principal types of service production carried on by family members. Farm families studied spent approximately 7 per cent of the total homemaking time on care of members. Town and city families spent a little over 12 per cent.[4] Many of these families had no small children. A study has been made of the time spent in the care of 24 infants. Four hours 38 minutes was the average daily time spent in the direct care of the baby, that is, in feeding, bathing, and dressing. An additional 1 hour 53 minutes was given to special housekeeping for the baby, as preparing food, washing, and ironing.[5] But this latter is commodity not service production.

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[4] See Table VIII.

We are justified thus in concluding that household production is, in the main, commodity production; and that only where there are small children or sick or aged to care for does service production become important.

NECESSARIES, COMFORTS, OR LUXURIES

The second classification of goods, i.e., necessaries, comforts, or luxuries, refers to the relation of the good to consumer need. Distinctions here are very vague. A good may be looked upon as a necessity merely because it is desired. Here is one family for example with an income of approximately $6,000, claiming that it can afford to buy "nothing but necessities, but with care lives comfortably."[6] A household group seeks to satisfy its felt wants, but these do not all have the same urgency. Felt needs tend to be arranged in a scale according to relative intensity of desire. Each individual may have a slightly different scale. This scale is subjective, however, and in order to discuss the importance of any type of goods in household production distinctions should be as objective as possible.

Alfred Marshall divides wealth into three classes: necessaries, comforts, and luxuries. "The first class includes all things required to meet wants which *must* be satisfied, while the latter consists of things which meet wants of a less urgent character." Marshall points out the vagueness existing here:

> When we say that a want *must* be satisfied, what are the consequences which we have in view if it is not satisfied? Do they include death? Or do they extend only to loss of strength and vigour? In other words, are necessaries the things which are necessary to life, or those which are necessary for efficiency?[7]

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[5] Laura Cowley Brossard, *A Study of the Time Spent in the Care of Infants One Year of Age and Under,* unpublished thesis, p. 10. See also, *J. H. Ec.,* XVIII, 125.

[6] *Incomes and Living Costs of University Faculty,* p. 123.

[7] *Principles of Economics,* 4th ed., p. 137.

Curtis points out important differences between necessaries and luxuries:

> The word "necessity" may be applied to those goods which are imperative and the satisfaction of which is considered essential to life. Necessity, as a technical term, relates thus to the most vital wants. [Necessity usually connotes physiological need.] Luxuries, on the other hand, contribute to less urgent desires; and those things which we call comforts are of intermediate importance to the consumer.[8]

Scales of value exist in the mind of each individual, and ideas concerning what is necessary vary greatly. A certain consensus of opinion, however, leads to the acceptance of some goods as necessaries of life. Included are that food, clothing, shelter, and education necessary to maintain health and working efficiency. A necessary thus defined is something much simpler, more meager, and in many ways different from the concept of necessaries held by many individuals. Their mode of living having habituated them to certain goods, the desire for these may be so intense that the goods appear as necessaries even though they bear little or no relation to physiological or even "vital" needs. The term "conventional necessaries" is at times applied to these. In contrast with necessaries, comforts and luxuries relate to less vital needs. A simple menu requiring little time in preparation will provide a diet adequate for physiological needs. But we seek food to satisfy social and esthetic as well as healthful needs. Providing satisfactory flavor, texture, color, and table service claims the major portion of the time spent in food preparation in most homes.

To what extent does household production provide necessaries? In order to answer this question we might inquire as to how much time and energy goes to the production of necessaries; or how much goes to goods which might be looked upon as comforts or luxuries. We might ask whether household production in any home would be a full-time job for one adult worker if necessaries alone were considered. On the whole, the production of necessaries seems relatively unimportant in the household. The basic processes, that is, those supplying the raw materials of food, clothing, and shelter, as well as the manufacture which gives goods their primary form, have largely passed from the household. Beyond the assembling of necessaries, and some simple manufacture in the preparation of food and construction of clothing, and some cleaning of the house and care of children, household production, in most cases, does not relate to what are usually termed necessaries of life.

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[8] R. E. Curtis, *Economics,* p. 141.

A careful analysis of the activities of a representative group of households would undoubtedly show that much time and energy goes to providing comforts. These may be, in many cases, merely "conventional comforts," carrying out an empty ritual with little meaning in terms of fuller life for the family. Polished damask, or more courses in the menu, or foods difficult to prepare but not necessarily more nutritious or palatable than simpler food might fall in this class. On the other hand many comforts and luxuries provided by household production may enrich greatly the life of family members.

Household production should not be criticized adversely because it contributes little to necessaries of life. Many business enterprises resemble household production in this respect. Indeed, advancement is, in part, measured by our progress beyond the provision of bare necessaries.

The passing of the production of basic necessaries from the household has had one very important result. Some money income is absolutely necessary. Household production cannot continue without it. If the husband's wage is the principal source of income and it is interrupted by sickness or unemployment, the family often has to choose between charity and the wife's seeking gainful employment. No amount of household production can replace certain goods procured with money.

THE HOUSEHOLD'S PART IN PRODUCING MATERIAL GOODS

Material goods are made available to the consumer by a long series of processes. Division of labor occurs, and household production shares in this division. In few cases does one economic unit carry to completion the production of a single good. In order to see the part which the household plays, it is necessary to analyze the whole process of making material goods available.

Production processes may be classified according to the nature of the utility created, that is, whether they create form, time, place, or possession utility. These concepts are helpful in analyzing any phase of production, in noting the way in which utilities are added to goods; it seems desirable, however, to enumerate the processes of production in terms more common to the everyday world of business and household management.

As generally conceived the processes by which goods are made available are of two types. First are the physical processes directly or closely associated with the good itself. These are for the most part technical, so their importance in producing the good is apparent. It is not easy to describe or define the other group; it assumes something of the "all-other" aspect. The productive activities included are not so closely associated with the good.

Outstanding in the first group are: (1) the extractive and genetic processes, e.g., agriculture, forestry, and mining; (2) transportation; (3) storage, including care during the period of storage; (4) manufacture, embracing all combining and recombining up to the good in the form desired; (5) such processes as rearrangement of bulk, so that the units of the commodity will be of suitable size, sorting, grading, branding, wrapping, packaging, and displaying goods, all of which are important in merchandising; (6) assembling, the collecting or gathering together and arranging of goods; (7) the cleaning and repair of goods after they are put into use. These processes include all the physical stages through which commodities pass in being made ready for use, or which are necessary in keeping them in satisfactory condition. The extractive processes are primary for every good; after raw materials are secured, human industry must change their form, place, and possession to suit the demands of consumers. Processes follow a fairly definite sequence, the products passing, for example, through diverse stages of manufacture, rearrangement, sorting, packaging, assembling, interspersed with series of transportation processes.

In the second group are processes such as: (1) Management as it relates to any of the processes of production. This includes, for example, activities in commercial production such as planning, organization, and supervision in manufacture, buying, selling, and transportation; and similar ones in household production, for example, income apportionment and planning and scheduling tasks. (2) Clerical work, e.g., record keeping. (3) Financing, a process which necessitates the tying up of capital during a period of time. (4) Risk taking, occasioned by uncertainty in regard to profit. (5) Advertising, whereby the buyer is informed of the goods available. (6) Price setting, deciding on a price at which an attempt will be made to sell or buy commodities. (7) Selling and buying, including the actual consummation of sales.

It is at once apparent that some of these processes pertain only to commercial production and are not important in household production. Financing and risk taking so far as these relate to production are commercial processes since they are specially connected with the earning of interest and profit. Price setting is usually carried on at the initiative of the seller; in few cases does the household buyer take an active part.

In other processes the household shares in varying degrees. The extractive processes, except for farm households, do not usually extend beyond a vegetable or flower garden. With increased urbanization such production has been diminishing in importance. A decrease is apparent even in farm households. Household production shares little in transportation. For farm households it may be a rather important item, although rural delivery and stores on wheels are becoming more common in rural communities. For most urban households retail stores are conveniently located, or else they deliver to the door of the house. In any case the consumer haul is usually short. Considerable storage is at times carried on, but its importance is declining. Storage room is being provided in the house only for supplies needed during relatively short periods of time. The old-time well-stocked family pantry has been transferred to the corner grocery. Provision must be made for goods used at successive intervals. Here commercial storage for furs, jewels, and other valuables supplements household storage. With the decrease in storage space, furniture or cast-off garments are not so likely to be stored in expectation that at some future date they may be useful. The storing of seasonal foods is largely past except for some home-grown products.

Manufacturing by the household group is also on the decline and has to do more and more with final preparation. Primary stages have been relinquished, and manufacture is taking the form of combining materials brought to a fairly completed form elsewhere. In spite of these changes this part of production is still important in terms of the proportion of time given to it. Kneeland's study of the homemaker's use of time revealed that the average time spent in sewing both by the rural and urban women was 4.5 hours per week, while for food preparation the farm homemaker spent 15.5 and the urban homemaker 10.3 hours per week.[9]

A conspicuous increase has occurred in assembling, in bringing goods together, in achieving desirable combinations. As goods used increase in variety and are made available to the family through more diverse channels the assembling function becomes more important. Cleaning and repair of goods possessed by the family are also very important. Some of this is, however, passing over to commercial workers.

The rôle of management both in commercial and household production has been heightened. In the household, management problems relative to technical processes of manufacture do not loom so large as formerly; but the household is more and more a part of a complicated economic system. As such it has many new problems.

Choice-making, income apportionment, and buying are important because the members of the family share in a money economy and in division of labor outside of the communistic household group. Goods are produced for sale and money income is received, but unless these two are brought together, consumer satisfaction cannot result. Money income must be converted into real income. Choice-making, budgeting or income-apportionment, and buying are necessary steps in bringing goods desired into the possession of the consumer. An increase in the

[9] "The Homemaker's Use of Time," *The Woman's City Club Bulletin,* XVIII, 199. See also, *Use of Time by Oregon Farm Homemakers,* Bul. 256.

number and the variety of the things bought with money makes these activities more significant. Owing to the importance of the assembling function, the housewife occupies a position in many respects analogous to that of the middleman in our marketing system. He is concerned with giving the goods the time, place, and possession utility desired, rather than form utility.

To see the household as part of the whole system of production is to realize that, if production were to stop short at the point to which it is now brought by paid workers, the production for most goods would be far from complete.

SMALL-SCALE AND UNSPECIALIZED PRODUCTION

Household production is small scale and includes a variety of tasks. This is true of every household, for even with a family of ten the production is small scale when contrasted with most industries, and even in the household where many tasks are delegated yet many different tasks remain.

These characteristics of household production are important because they affect the mechanical appliances used, the specialization possible, the application of scientific principles by the manager, the experience and training possible in any one line. All these have an important bearing on efficiency.

Because household production is small scale, efficient equipment and machines are often not economical. Most machines installed in the home are ordinarily used only for a short period during the day or the week. Hence a machine must be inexpensive or afford an extraordinary advantage in order to make it economical for household use. In spite of the marked increase in the number and the variety of household machines, modern household appliances are to be found in relatively few homes. It is probable that with more imagination in adapting machinery to household use machines will be more widely used. As volume of sales increases, lower per unit costs ought to bring a lower price for washing machines, ironers, and other pieces of equipment. Further mechanization of the household is no doubt possible. Nevertheless the size of the household group limits greatly the introduction of machines. Extensive use of machines in industry has been made possible largely by growth in size of business unit.

The absence of specialization limits the fullest utilization of the capabilities of workers. The housewife is manager of a complex group of activities, buyer of a whole host of consumer's goods,[10] as well as a manufacturer carrying on many types of physical production. Such a worker cannot acquire the skill of a specialist in any line. Clark considers that: "Nobody can produce anything efficiently until he becomes a specialist in producing it, and he cannot become a specialist until he makes it his chief business in life to turn out that one product."[11] The very character of the work, i.e., its variety, precludes the possibility of the high output per unit of time achieved in many factories.

The lack of specialization reduces the output of the worker per unit of labor. So also does frequent change of task. It is a recognized fact that a saving of time occurs when the same task is followed without interruption. Arnquist, in her study of the homemaker's use of time, found that "during the waking day, an average of 67 changes of work were made, or one every twenty minutes."[12] These changes were exclusive of interruptions and tasks of less than five minutes. These findings are evidence, however, of what does happen rather than what would occur were tasks carefully planned to minimize shifts. Even with careful planning a large number of shifts is inevitable; and motion and effort are wasted with every shift from one task to another. It takes time to "speed up" on a muscular act, for the muscles to become adjusted to repeated consecutive motion.

HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION CONTRASTED WITH THAT OF MODERN INDUSTRY

Large-scale production increases the output per unit of labor and capital employed. Minute division of labor becomes possible and the worker becomes very efficient at his task. Elaborate labor-saving machines may be introduced. These increase greatly the productivity of labor and lower the per unit cost of output, especially when the machines are operated continuously. Large-scale production makes this possible. With division of labor the aptitudes and capabilities of the workers in furthering production can be more fully utilized. The capable workers can be reserved for the most difficult tasks. Division between performance and management occurs and more attention is given to the "best" method, since waste in any single process, however slight, is of considerable importance when processes are repeated many times. Because of this repetition, extensive experimentation and study for the purpose of evolving new devices and methods rendering production more efficient are worth while.

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[10] Henry Harap, in his book, *Education of the Consumer,* discusses the knowledge that he considers the "consumer" should possess in order to buy intelligently. After glancing through this book, hope of all-round efficiency in household buying will probably fade out.

[11] *Economics of Overhead,* p. 105.

[12] *The Present Use of Work Time of Farm Homemakers,* Wash., Agri. Exp. Sta. Bul. 234 (1929), p. 29.

Household production presents a marked contrast. Machines are used to only a limited extent; even tools in many cases are poor. The workers are unspecialized, and there is relatively little opportunity for the worker to become expert in those tasks where more than a moderate degree of skill is necessary. Since each worker performs many tasks which make different demands on her capabilities, there is little opportunity for utilizing the varied capabilities of the workers. Specialization in management, which plays a very important part in the greater efficiency of large-scale centralized production, does not occur. In the household the worker must criticize her own performance; and in addition to carrying on the tasks must, if production is to be improved, seek out better methods. And as manager she has to consider a whole host of productive activities; she is not limited to a few as is the factory manager. Moreover, when the production is small scale, minor wastes do not seem of much account. What household manager attempts to change her accustomed methods in potato paring if, for example, 1 minute 30 seconds per day, or even considerably more, could be saved thereby? Yet if the process were continuous throughout the day that repeated saving on the same unit of labor would be important.

It must be borne in mind, however, that waste and efficiency cannot be judged alone by speed in turning out a given quantity of goods or with an eye to only one part of the production process. In a commercial bakery the time cost per worker per loaf of bread may be one-fifth of that required per home-baked loaf. Yet it may be more economical to bake the bread at home. But the whole question of economy must be postponed for more complete discussion in a later chapter.

CHAPTER IX

THE COST AND VALUE OF GOODS PRODUCED

Cost! Value! These terms are continually on the lips of business men. They are also heard in the household but not always with the same meaning as in business. In business, money costs predominate and price is a measure of the value of goods. In the household, human costs are especially important, and since goods are not sold value cannot be measured by price.

COSTS OF HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION

Costs in household production have three outstanding characteristics: first, it is difficult, if not impossible, to estimate many of them in monetary terms; second, it is difficult to determine the direct cost of separate goods and services; and third, many of the costs are indirect, or overhead.

If raw materials must be purchased, e.g., flour, dress goods, soap, gas, electric power, the money cost for these is very evident. But the labor of the family is not paid in money, and it receives no market price. A well-known economic principle is that a thing costs us what we have to give up to get it. Accordingly the money cost of the housewife's labor is the salary or wage she could earn in a paid occupation. This is what she gives up to perform household tasks.

According to this method the money cost of the housewife's labor would vary with her bargaining power in other occupations. It would change considerably during the life history of the family. When a woman first became a homemaker the money cost of her labor, if she were a professional or skilled worker, would probably be much higher than at a later period, when, in many instances, she can no longer command the same salary as before. The cost would be higher in a city where she could find gainful work than in a village where few jobs for married women were available. This method of estimating the cost of housewife's labor, although by no means a satisfactory one, is often helpful in deciding whether or not the wife should give her full time to household production or become a gainful worker.

Income given up should not in all cases, however, be looked upon as entirely a cost of household production. The other members of the family may desire the woman's presence in the home, to the exclusion of gainful work, for social as well as economic reasons; or the woman may be glad to escape certain inconveniences associated with gainful work.

Other members of the family also work. If time is not taken from gainful work it usually reduces leisure. Costs might be stated in terms of tennis foregone, a book or magazine not read. These are real costs but since largely subjective cannot be totaled and included in a quantitative statement of costs.

The costs of household labor may, however, be estimated in terms of the number of hours spent. Recent time studies of homemaking give a picture of part of the cost of maintaining family standards. Time and money costs are sometimes studied together. For example, the average clothing expenditures for 99 rural families of Mississippi during 1928-29 amounted to $204 plus 178.4 hours. Average laundry cost per family per week was 45 cents plus 6 hours.[1] This money cost included direct cost only; no overhead was considered.

The total time costs for a given task or for a good produced cannot always be entirely determined. Kneeland, for example, found: "A serious difficulty is met in determining the number of hours to be recorded as spent in the care of children. For much of the time which the homemaker spends with her children cannot reasonably be considered as part of her work, since it also serves as her recreation and social life and frequently as part of her outdoor exercise."[2] Is time spent in taking the baby to the park to be considered child care or recreation? How shall we classify time spent in reading while keeping an eye on the baby? When production and consumption are thus intermingled it is difficult to determine the time costs of production. Time does, however, afford the best means of obtaining a measure of labor costs in household production.

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[1] D. Dickens, *Clothing and House Linen Expenditure of 99 Rural Families of Mississippi During 1928-9,* Agri. Exp. Sta. Bul. 294 (1931), pp. 24-25.

[2] "Woman's Economic Contribution in the Home," *Annals Am. Acad.,* CXLIII, p. 35.

The third characteristic of costs is that many are indirect, that is, they do not vary as the output varies. Some costs are much the same whether there are two or five members in the family, whether the husband comes home for lunch or eats downtown, whether laundry is sent out or done by family members. Some of the indirect costs are rent, interest on and depreciation of equipment and furnishings, and finally, and perhaps most important, the time of the housewife taken from gainful work. These resemble the overhead costs in a business enterprise. Edie describes overhead costs by distinguishing them from operating costs:

> Operating costs are illustrated by the labor which is employed while the factory is busy or the power hired to run the machinery. Their chief characteristic is that they vary as the output varies. . . . Overhead costs are illustrated by interest on fixed investment, permanent managerial salaries, depreciation, rent, insurance, and taxes. Their chief characteristic is that they do not vary as the output varies. An increase or a decrease in the output does not bring a proportionate increase or decrease in these costs, they are fixed charges on the business and must be met whether the business operates or not. If the output doubles, these charges remain substantially the same. If the output is cut in half, the fixed charges will go on undiminished.[3]

Clark considers: "The work of the household—buying, cooking, planning meals, etc., is largely an overhead cost."[4] The manager is the only worker required, but her full-time presence may seem necessary even though the work is very light.

It is of interest to note here that actual labor time for a particular task is a direct not an indirect cost. Time is taken from leisure or some other work.

In estimates of cost, overhead is often overlooked. The manager forgets about it and includes only direct cost when she considers whether a certain task is worth while. Kyrk points out that no one has yet undertaken the task of comparing the cost of serving food prepared in private kitchens and served in private dining-rooms with the cost of eating out. "Usually only the direct costs of food, the cost of raw materials and possibly of ice and fuel, are compared with the cost of meals in restaurants and boarding-houses."[5]

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[3] *Economics,* p. 135.

[4] *Economics of Overhead,* p. 355.

A high proportion of overhead costs has a direct effect on the production program. This is true in the household as well as in a commercial enterprise. The normal desire is to secure maximum returns from all costs incurred. Idleness must be eliminated wherever possible, and resources used to their fullest capacity. Idle time and unused resources are sheer waste; consequently tasks are often added which net a very low return per labor hour. For much production only direct costs are considered. Homemade bread may be made and sheets hemmed at a money saving of five cents an hour—not a very a high payment for labor. The cost in time may be very high but production may be considered worth while if only some money be saved. The cost of labor is considered only if there be an alternative use to which it might be put, whether for other production or for leisure. As long as there is no decision between this or that, there will be little consideration of the cost of time.

The character of the household group puts certain limitations on ways of spreading indirect costs. In industry the market may be enlarged in order that machines and other items which increase overhead costs be used to greater capacity. This is seldom the case in the household. The family washing machine is used a few hours a week, the cook stove a few hours per day; this is the extent of the family's need for such equipment. The time of the housewife spent in managing, buying, and even cooking, might be made to serve a larger group.

As the group becomes larger the time given to household tasks does not increase proportionately. The labor time per person served decreases. This is shown in Table XXX. The time per person in the Oregon families studied was approximately twice as great in the two to three member households as in the

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[5] *Economic Problems of the Family*, p. 64.

TABLE XXX

TOTAL WEEKLY TIME SPENT IN HOMEMAKING, PER PERSON, IN CERTAIN OREGON FAMILIES, CLASSIFIED BY SIZE OF HOUSEHOLD*

Size of household	Farm families			Non-country non-farm families		
	hr.		min.	hr.		min.
2 and less than 3 persons.......	20	—	51	22	—	39
3 and less than 4 persons.......	17	—	40	18	—	06
4 and less than 5 persons.......	14	—	37	15	—	50
5 and less than 6 persons.......	13	—	33	13	—	25
6 and less than 7 persons.......	11	—	20	11	—	55
7 and less than 8 persons.......	10	—	54	10	—	56

* Maud Wilson, unpublished data.

seven to eight. In the larger families simpler foods may have been served or more goods and services purchased. The lower per unit time cost in larger families is due to a large extent, however, to the fact that meals for four take very little longer to prepare than meals for three. The same principle applies to other goods.

In speaking of the overhead costs of the household Clark remarks: "Here the economy of a large family is very real, though it is so narrowly limited and so bound up with other and more important qualitative values that a serious economic discussion of it might seem to argue lack of a sense of humor."[6] Truly one does not have a large family in order to spread the indirect costs of the household.

With a larger family the per unit cost for many items would go down. At the same time, however, the total needs to be met from money income and household labor would probably increase. The net effect would be a decline in the quantity and quality of goods per person unless additional income and labor were forthcoming to meet the increased total demand of the larger group.

Overhead costs are at times spread by the introduction of boarders and lodgers into the group; and through carrying on other paid production, thus lessening the time costs which can be charged against household production. There are decided limitations to the possibility of spreading the overhead costs through an increase in the group served; costs are spread more often by adding new tasks, or by a transfer of part of the woman's time to paid production.

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[6] *Op. cit.,* p. 355.

The importance of certain indirect costs is strikingly brought out in a recent study of certain overhead costs connected with preparing and serving meals in small homes. "The calculations of overhead cost took account only of the value of the rent and furnishings attributable to the area used for the preparation and service of meals. The cost of heating and cleaning this area was not included in the estimate, nor was consideration given to the cost of labor, fuel, and refrigeration required for the meals themselves."[7] The study included one-room apartments, five- to seven-room houses occupied by families of moderate means, and finally houses comparable to the standard indicated by the Bureau of Labor minimum quantity budget.

In the apartments the average overhead cost in the items studied was 22 cents per day. The average size of families living in the moderate-income homes studied was 3.4 persons, and the overhead cost per person per day was 30 cents. For a family of five the overhead cost per person per day in the minimum budget home was 10 cents. The overhead cost per person is higher in the small than in large families. In any family the more persons a given set of equipment serves and the more meals they eat at home, the smaller the overhead per person per meal.

THE HOUSEWIFE VALUES HER CONTRIBUTION

The family values the order and cleanliness of the house, and the meals served, according to the amount of satisfaction derived. Value here refers to utility and is subjective, existing in the minds of the users. The term value in economics is usually restricted to value in exchange. In a business enterprise the value added to a product is the difference between the cost of raw materials and the market value of the finished product. Goods resulting from household production receive no market valuation, hence the method followed by the manufacturer in determining the value added to the product cannot in this case be followed.

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[7] Greta Gray, *et al.,* "The Overhead Cost of Meals in Small Homes," *J. H. Ec.,* 25 (1933, Nov.), 749.

In studies of farm standards of living estimates have been made of the value of farm products consumed by the family. A common method is to value farm products at the price secured if they are sold. Purchase price is also used. Hoyt found:

> For purposes of exchange a farm family value their milk, obviously, at what they get for it in exchange; for purposes of consumption they value it at what they would have to pay for it for consumption. This may not have been true on old fashioned farms, far from a market, where many things were not marketable and the retail prices of farm products were not known; but as farms become business enterprises to a greater and greater degree, it is certainly increasingly true that the farm family value their own products for consumption just as the community values them. Again and again our farm housewives speak to us of their preserves, their butter, eggs, poultry and meat, not in terms of what they cost on the farm but in terms of their retail price.[8]

The product may be valued at the price which could be secured if sold, or of the retail purchase price, or at a value somewhere between these two.

Farm products are not the only ones that may be valued by contrasting the money cost of the homemade good with that of a similar good in the market. Estimates may also be made of the value added in garment construction, by laundering, and by many types of food preparation. It may be difficult at times to find a market good exactly like that produced at home so that goods contrasted are strictly comparable.

Another method of evaluating household production is to place a value on labor of the housewife and other members who share in household tasks to any appreciable extent. It is at times suggested that the value of the woman's labor is equal to the cost of hiring a paid worker to perform the same services. This method was used by the National Bureau of Economic Research in estimating the contribution made by housewives to national income. The value of a housewife's service was placed at $750 per year and the total contribution in 1918 at 15.3 billions. In the same year the national money income was estimated as 61 billions.[9]

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[8] "Difficulties in the Determination of Rural Standards," *J. Farm Economics,* IX (1927), 221.

It is by no means simple to evaluate the housewife's labor even in terms of a substitute worker. Such workers are seldom available. Domestic workers are usually hired to take over only part of the work. The woman usually continues to carry on much of the management, market selection, and child care. Kneeland considers that the problem of placing a value on the woman's economic contribution by estimating the cost of substitute services is far from simple. "For," says she, "there is no single type of worker who can serve as a full substitute for the housewife. No other worker performs the same combination of tasks, or works the same hours or with the same degree of skill."[10]

It is hard to find a worker to whom the housewife's job as a whole could be delegated. Hence the value of her services might be determined by building up a "wage" from a combination of part-time jobs performed by various specialists. The housewife is manager, shopper, nursemaid, cook, waitress, laundress, seamstress, etc. Her tasks might be delegated to these specialized workers. Such a method of estimating her contribution involves many difficulties and necessitates many arbitrary decisions as to the time spent in the various tasks, and the wage rates customarily paid. Tasks calling for different types of workers are frequently performed by the housewife during the same moment of time. Much of management and child care, for example, may be combined with the care and cleaning of the house, or with food preparation or clothing construction. How is the proper amount of time to be allocated to each type of work in order that the contribution be correctly evaluated? Even after the hours spent in each type of work are determined there is the further difficulty of deciding on the wage rate. The wage rate must be that of a worker of the same efficiency as the housewife.

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[9] *Income in the United States, Its Amount and Distribution, 1909-19,* Vol. I, p. 58.

[10] "Woman's Economic Contribution in the Home," *op. cit.,* p. 35.

Another method suggested for estimating the value of the household contribution is to compare the cost of boarding and lodging with the cost of maintaining an independent household. The difference in the cost would presumably be the value of the contribution made by the members. This is far from satisfactory since the comparison is between two very different ways of living. Moreover, the household group when boarding would continue to carry on much production for itself. It would be relieved of the food preparation and the care of the house, but much child care and market selection, care of clothing, and other tasks would remain. The difference in the cost of these two modes of living would differ greatly according to the size of the family. With a large family the difference in cost would be considerable; for a family of two, the boarding and lodging might be found to cost practically the same as maintaining a home. It might even be a little less. If such were the case, would one be justified in concluding that the labor of members in the independent home had no value?

How do women themselves evaluate their labor? A group of 195 farm homemakers in New York were asked to estimate a rate of pay for their own work and that of other members of the household. Of this estimate Cannon writes:

> They could without difficulty estimate the rate of pay for their own work on the farm, and for the help which they received from other members of the family on chores and general housework, because there was a market rate for such work. But it was difficult for the housewives to estimate the value of their own time as homemaker. In many cases, they resorted to the rate of pay for women who had been hired to do the housework at so much per hour, per week, or per month. Their estimate of the value of the board furnished was then added to obtain the total value of the work.

In this estimate no recognition was given to the managerial skill of the housewife, to differences between the housewife and a hired worker in degree of skill, or to the extra effort the housewife might put forth since she was working for her own family. Differences such as these are so difficult to measure that Cannon believes it best to omit them in comparing the value of the unpaid labor in various households. The average yearly value of the work for the household of the 195 homemakers was estimated to be $1,044.[11]

When possible methods are examined one is forced to conclude that only very crude estimates can be made of the total "value" added to the product by household production. Since "value" is not readily determined the contribution made by the members of the family is apt to be overlooked, not only by the family group itself but also by society as a whole. This failure to appreciate the importance of household production affects the woman more than the other members of the family. Kneeland considers that "any reasonable statement, however low, of the money value of her work would raise the popular estimate of her economic importance."[12] The satisfaction a worker derives from her job is affected by her sense of economic importance.

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[11] *The Family Finances of 195 Farm Families in Tompkins County, New York, 1927-8,* Agri. Exp. Sta. Bul. 522, p. 73.

[12] *Annals, op. cit.,* p. 38.

CHAPTER X

AIMS AND INCENTIVES OF THE HOUSEHOLD WORKER

Activities cannot be understood apart from incentives or purposes. Incentives are the life blood, the motivating and governing forces which give an enterprise vitality and direction. In a business enterprise the desire for profit predominates. The kind and character of the good and human costs and satisfactions are of secondary importance. In the household the producing and consuming group are one; and the needs and desires of the group both as producers and as consumers influence the productive activities.

WELFARE AND SATISFACTION

As consumers, family members desire goods to maintain physical health and vigor. The preparation of nutritious, sanitary food, much of the cleaning, the physical care of children and the care of the sick are carried on in response to this need. Esthetic desires lead to order and cleanliness far beyond that necessary for health and efficiency, to the assembling and care of attractive harmonious house furnishings, to the serving of food which satisfies the eye and tempts the palate as well as meets nutritional standards.

Each person desires certain goods to meet physical and esthetic needs. He also desires recognition of his importance and attention to his individual likes and dislikes not because they are specially good or bad but merely because they are his. In the family perhaps as nowhere else this is and can be done.

Since the family is part of a community, some provision must be made for the family to share in its social life, and certain standards must be maintained so the family may feel itself a worthy member of society. It may be that guests are entertained, that household schedules are adjusted to meet social engagements, that floors are polished and courses added to the menus in response to the social needs of the members.

In household production an effort is put forth by the worker not only because goods are desired but also because these goods are for members of her own family. She is especially interested in their welfare, and is willing to put forth extra effort. Personal service to individual members may be performed as an expression of affection. For those things that the family specially enjoys the response of the group may provide an added incentive for greater effort.

The satisfaction the worker herself derives from the performance of certain tasks may also make her more industrious. A spotless home may be, to a greater extent, the result of the worker's pride than of wishes of other members. Peaches may be canned because the gleaming product brings a sense of accomplishment; and in doing this for her family the woman may feel she is doing her duty. Perhaps she may feel that she is being thrifty and derives satisfaction from this even though the actual saving in dollars and cents is small.

Incentives operating in family production are as varied and complex as life itself. To see the aims and purposes of family production more clearly and understand how they affect household problems, it is helpful to contrast the aims of household production with those of a business enterprise.

PROFIT NOT THE AIM

The ultimate aim of the business enterprise is profit. This is an important fact in business management. Profit provides a definite concrete objective test of success or failure. The test can be applied to the final outcome of the whole enterprise, and to single processes and groups of activities. This measurement is possible since the costs as well as the value of the goods produced are measured in like terms. All the costs incurred in the production of goods, as far as the enterprise is concerned, may be reduced to monetary terms. Sale price affords a measure of goods produced. Records may be, and are, specially devised to show the amount and the source of profit and loss. Calculations such as these act as a check on the unwise use of resources and serve as an efficient guide in shaping the policy of the enterprise in order that its purpose be achieved.

The aim in family production is different in every respect: in the nature of the aim, in the tests which may be applied in order to determine whether the purpose is being achieved, and in the guides available for directing production into the most satisfactory channels.

Since sale does not follow production, pecuniary profit is not the motive. Goods are produced for use; and returns are in use value rather than exchange value. Human costs are important. The household enterprise is run for the comfort and convenience and well-being of its members. The extent to which household production maximizes the possibilities of well-being, comfort, satisfaction, and pleasure of the members is a measure of its success. Gains cannot, however, be stated in dollars.

To achieve welfare and satisfaction, only vague, uncertain guides are available. There is an absence of scientific formulae to direct the attainment of the ends desired. What specific goods, for example, are required to ensure "well-being," efficiency, and esthetic satisfaction? There is little exact knowledge of the relation of goods to human needs. It is only in the case of the food necessary to maintain bodily health that one can speak with any degree of authority. Minimum standards of housing, clothing, and general sanitary conditions are partly based on science. These relate only to physical well-being. Beyond a very limited group of goods, anyone setting up even minimum standards bases his judgment on what is customary.

The dilemma of the household producer is that of the consumer in general. The difficulty of choice is the same whether one is choosing goods in the market or deciding how the labor of the group shall be used. Mitchell, when contrasting the position of the housewife with that of the manufacturer, states:

> The latter can learn from an industrial chemist and a mechanical engineer far more about the materials he uses, the processes at his disposal, the machinery best adapted to his purpose than the housewife can learn from all the living

> physiologists and psychologists about the scientific laws of bodily and mental development. . . . Hence the housewife's work presents more unsolved problems, is more a matter of guesswork, and cannot in the nature of things be as well done as the work of making and carrying goods.

Mitchell feels that "Until such time as science shall illuminate the housewife's path, she must walk in the twilight of traditional opinion."[1]

Scientific guides are absent. Nor can one learn readily from experience. The element of personal judgment is large and results do not lend themselves to calculation. The satisfactions that one derives from household services are mixed with many others. The contributions from one group of household activities cannot in definite terms be viewed apart from the whole; nor can the satisfactions which result from household production be separated from those arising from other things. The effects of various factors influencing the individual are merged.

Because of this blending of results mistakes cannot readily be traced. For example, Billy, aged eight years, tires easily. His mother lays the blame on the mile walk to school. She quite overlooks the fact that Billy's meals are irregular, that he eats things that she knows he should not have, and just will not go to bed early. The effect of her mistakes is not clear cut and decisive. As a result they continue to be repeated, and failures are laid to causes outside the housewife's control; and the old course is continued. Wise choices do not entrench themselves and become habitual as rapidly as they might if satisfactions from various goods retained their separate identity. Tugwell in describing the housewife's dilemma says:

> She attempts to create family welfare. But this is difficult to measure. Hence the tendency of faulty customs to persist; they cannot easily be proved to be bad and they are harder to rout out, once they are firmly fixed.[2]

In directing the use of resources, the household manager is handicapped by the absence of any accurate measure of costs incurred or of value added to the goods produced. The importance of this can best be realized by noting the part which the value-cost test plays in business. Clark states:

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[1] "The Backward Art of Spending," *Am. Ec. Rev.*, II, 276.

[2] *American Economic Life*, p. 474.

> The backbone of the science of economics is the balancing of value against cost. This sets up a test by which to judge an activity—the producing of any good or the rendering of any service—in order to prove if it be economically self-sustaining or no. . . . Economic efficiency consists in making things which are worth more than they cost.[3]

Deliberation by the household manager in most instances does occur. There is a weighing of probable costs against the probable use values to be derived. The exactness of her decisions in regard to her purpose is, however, far behind the exactness of a business manager's decisions.

When the aims of the household and a business enterprise are contrasted it is seen that many methods of great importance in the management of a business enterprise are of little importance to the household manager. Accurate and carefully balanced records of receipts and expenditures, for example, are much less significant in household management than in a business. A record of only 95 per cent of the expenditures is considered by many to be an adequate record to guide the household manager in planning future expenditures. Nor is continued accounting always looked upon as necessary after desirable habitual modes of expenditure have been established. The household is like the business in that it attempts to make limited resources yield the greatest possible returns, in that both have money income and money outgo, that the economic history of the two may to a certain extent be written in dollars and cents. But the success or failure of the household is not written in the financial statement to the same extent as is that of the business enterprise, nor does the expenditure record furnish so reliable a guide.

COMPETITION NOT IMPORTANT

Competition as it is understood in business does not affect the household. Any rivalry which does exist between households is social, not economic, in character. No matter how efficient is production in one household, there is no economic reason why another household should, or must, improve because of this. The efficient household does not force the inefficient household to cease operation. This, in some measure, accounts for the fact that improvements in household production come very slowly. In commenting on this aspect of household production Mitchell long ago pointed out:

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[3] *Economics of Overhead,* p. 17.

> The limitations of family life effectually debar us from making full use of our best domestic brains. The trained intelligence and the conquering capacity of the highly efficient housewife cannot be applied to the congenial task of setting to rights the disordered households of her inefficient neighbors. . . . The woman with a consuming passion for better management cannot compel her less progressive sisters to adopt her system of management against their wills, as an enterprising advertiser can whip his reluctant rivals into line.[4]

Competition is a common incentive stimulating the gainful worker to increase his efficiency or at least to maintain a certain standard. It is difficult to know how much importance to attach to this difference between the household and the gainful worker. Pruette in describing the position of the housewife says:

> The failure to perform her duties brings no such immediately drastic results as discharge and cessation of funds which threaten the man's defection, and she can, if she desires, maintain the house, cook the meals, and care for the children, after a fashion, with a minimum of effort and inefficiency scarcely to be tolerated in any work performed under supervision, as, in one form or another, is all gainful work.[5]

It is well to ask, however, what in our competitive system is behind the gainful worker's fear of dismissal. In some cases it is the loss of prestige that would follow. But for the most part the worker does not want to be deprived of the money income that he earns. This income constitutes his claim to market goods. The fundamental incentive behind competition is the desire for goods.

It should be recognized that the basic desire of both the gainful worker and the housewife is the same. Two things may, however, cause the incentive for efficiency to be stronger in the gainful worker than the housewife. In the first place money income is necessary for essentials while the housewife contributes more to comforts and luxuries; and, second, in competitive occupations a certain standard of performance is usually necessary if the worker is to have a chance to earn at all. No such standard applies in the household. It happens, however, that affection, a sense of responsibility, and the joy of directly caring for one's family produce, in many cases, an incentive for labor as strong as that aroused by competition in gainful work. Kyrk says: "It is more than doubtful whether the pecuniary motive would lead to greater zeal in seeking knowledge of child care and training or greater assiduity in following formulae and rules than does the present motivation."[6]

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[4] "Backward Art of Spending," *Am. Ec. Rev.*, II, 274.

[5] *Women and Leisure*, p. 82.

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[6] *Economic Problems of the Family,* p. 68.

CHAPTER XI

SCIENTIFIC MANAGEMENT IN THE HOUSEHOLD

So much is being said about scientific management in industry that we turn with interest to inquire about the methods by which the household manager directs her enterprise.

TYPES OF MANAGEMENT

Management may be classified according to the way in which managers reach initial decisions. On this basis three different types of management are recognized: (1) traditional and customary; (2) trial and error, or rule-of-thumb; and (3) "scientific."[1]

When management is traditional or customary, decisions are based on acquired experience. What has been found satisfactory in the past, or is at present considered satisfactory by others, serves as a guide to the household manager. Perhaps in no case, however, have custom and tradition held complete sway. New methods are evolved, or old ones modified through a trial and error process. Workers by utilizing experience and rather haphazard incomplete information adapt customary or traditional methods to their particular needs.

"Scientific" management has a number of connotations. The term was first used by scientific engineers who studied tools, processes, and conditions of work in factories. As a result the term most frequently relates to management which seeks to reduce to a minimum the time and energy necessary to perform a given task. Taylor, the most outstanding figure in the development of scientific management in industry, was asked why he had not turned his attention to scientific management in phases of management other than production. He replied that life was too short, that it was better to demonstrate its possibilities in one field, and leave to others its further development.[2] Scientific management has to some taken on a very broad meaning. McMahon, for example, considers: "A successful presentation of an appearance indicating an extensive financial outlay when in reality the feat has been accomplished on a surprisingly low income requires no small degree of intelligent application of existing knowledge. Herein lies one of the most appreciable features of scientific management of the home."[3] Someone else has said that the scientific method is simply the method of basing decisions on facts.[4]

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[1] H. Kyrk, *Economic Problems of the Family,* p. 65; Miss Kyrk recognizes three kinds of management: i. e., conventional, systematic, and scientific.

However broad or narrow the definition of scientific management, all those using the phrase will agree that "scientific" management does not accept a method because of custom or tradition; nor does it leave the evolving of new methods to trial and error nor to the experience of one or more workers. Rather it attempts to consider carefully all the factors involved, and by analysis, careful record, accumulated knowledge and experience to arrive at the "best" method. In order to avoid confusion between "scientific" and other types of management, it seems advisable to confine this term to that management which is based on known scientific principles or on controlled experiment, or derived from co-ordinated systematic study which has been carried on in order to determine the best method to be followed. Moreover, scientific management relates not only to technical problems, but also to such tasks as deciding what vegetables should be included in the diet, when to feed the baby, what make of radio to select.

CUSTOMARY METHODS DECLINE IN IMPORTANCE

Until recent years household management has been customary and traditional with new methods evolved, or decisions reached, by trial and error. There was little understanding of underlying scientific principles. Only a limited comparison was made between methods of various workers. The possibility of error was great.

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[2] The Taylor Society, *Scientific Management in American Industry,* p. 12.
[3] *Social and Economic Standards of Living,* p. 128.
[4] *Homemaking as a Centre of Research,* p. 22.

Communities were isolated, and individual households drew on the experience of only a small group. In addition written records were few. The acquired knowledge of the group was transmitted through a system of apprenticeship. Daughters were trained in the household arts and crafts by their mothers. The best housekeeper in the community was the fountain-head of knowledge in matters pertaining to the household.

Many housewives undoubtedly evolved for themselves what seemed to be the best method for their particular circumstances. An intelligent household manager who analyzes her tasks from day to day, and makes systematic use of her experience and that of others, may evolve the best method even though no rules scientifically determined have been laid down for her to follow. The fact that a method so evolved is frequently not the "best" has been pointed out by Taylor. He says: "The analysis of a piece of work into its elements almost always reveals the fact that many of the conditions surrounding and accompanying the work are defective."[5]

The character of household management is changing somewhat. A great increase in scientific knowledge has occurred. For example, scientific advances have made it possible for the household manager to base her choice of foods for health on rules which are largely fundamentally sound. We have carefully formulated rules for the preparation of the various foods. Science has something to say about sanitation, lighting, heating.

Household management has been indirectly affected by the development of "scientific management" in industry. Principles have been formulated and methods of analyzing manipulative processes developed. This attention to management in industry has stimulated a study of the technical aspects of the household manager's job. Frederick and Gilbreth are among the pioneers who have analyzed the mechanical processes of the household. The study of household processes has also been taken up to some extent by schools and departments of home economics. Time and motion studies have been made in order to determine the best conditions of work, the "best" tools and methods of procedure; for example, kitchen arrangements and dishwashing procedure have been studied. This study of household tasks has helped to break down customary and traditional management for certain tasks and to evolve methods more scientific than those possible under the former régime where the household manager had no general principles to guide her and little help from specialists in analyzing her tasks.

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[5] "Discussion of Report of Committee on the Present State of the Art of Industrial Management," see L. Marshall, *Business Administration,* p. 589.

Customary and traditional methods are at present decreasing in importance. The household manager is less and less dependent on trial and error, for there is a steady increase in sources of reliable information to guide her in her choice of goods, in their selection on the market, in the preparation of food, in child care, and in the other tasks which are commonly a part of household production.

HOW SCIENTIFIC WILL MANAGEMENT BECOME?

The housewife who desires to be "scientific" in her management finds certain handicaps imposed. Household production is small scale and unspecialized. As well as being manager the housewife, is, for example, a financial adviser, a buyer of a great variety of goods, a dietitian, a cook, a nursemaid, a teacher, a laundress, and a scrub-woman. She is not a specialized worker as is the manager in many industries.

Since the worker has many tasks she is bound to rely in a large measure on what her most intimate group has found satisfactory, and on habit which may no longer represent what is best in view of changed circumstances. Even a woman who devotes much time to management finds it very difficult to keep up with the best methods in every line. She is handicapped in analyzing her own tasks. The discovery of the one best method is on the whole the work of the specialist. Taylor maintained that the science which underlies each act of every workman is so great that no workman is able to understand it without specific and very detailed guidance.[6] In industry it is the function of the specialized manager to determine the best method and train the worker.

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[6] A. H. Church and L. P. Alford, "The Principles of Management," Leon C. Marshall, *Business Administration,* p. 821.

Since household production is small scale, extensive experimentation often does not appear worth while, even though the accumulation of small savings over a period of time may net a considerable difference. In business it is generally allowed: "If the inquiry relates to operations which will be repeated many times, as in processes of manufacturing staple articles, detailed experimental investigations may be worth while. In other cases it is well to consider the total economic value involved, the possible maximum that could be saved, and the probable cost of the investigation."[7] The expenditure of time, energy, and money necessary for the discovery of better methods often does not seem worth while to the household manager in view of limited gains which follow from improvements.

Furthermore, the manager is largely dependent on specialized investigators for the discovery of principles underlying the wise selection of food for health, the best height of the various working surfaces, the best construction of her household tools. In commenting on the difficulties experienced by the household manager in analyzing her tasks, Kneeland says: "Finding 'the one best way' for even a simple domestic job is a difficult and time-consuming matter, requiring much skill and still more patience."[8] Without aid from the expert she can by a general analysis eliminate, for example, only obvious wastes of time and energy in a manipulative process, or discover perhaps what type of food causes marked digestive disturbance.

The expert advice available is often in the form of general rules which will serve many housewives. Each manager must adapt them to her particular situation. The difficulty experienced by the manager will depend on the uniqueness of her individual case. In food planning rules usually relate to health and to cost in general. The household manager must consider also such things as local costs, food idiosyncrasies, likes and dislikes of the members, time which can be given to food preparation, and the money to be expended in view of other goods desired. In food preparation and many cleaning tasks directions can usually be followed without much modification. The materials and tools utilized are in a large measure standardized. Specific rules regarding the best height of working surfaces, satisfactory lighting, and good kitchen arrangements aid the manager greatly. Ideal conditions may be described yet she may not know what is best in view of the limited amount which she has to spend.

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[7] *Ibid.*, p. 814.

[8] "Limitations of Scientific Management in Household Work," *J. H. Ec.*, XX (1928), 312.

The household manager may find it difficult to benefit greatly by the advice of others. Kneeland considers: "In attempting to use the studies which others have made she is met by different conditions of work and different family requirements. To adapt procedures suited to other homes to the particular circumstances of her own requires a study almost as exacting as the original."[9] This difficulty is not equally important for all tasks. For example, rules for mixing a cake could be followed exactly, whereas detailed plans for time schedules and budgets are of little value.

It may happen that an established standard practice for such a task as dishwashing may be of little aid to the housewife who does not possess the standard equipment, sink, drain boards, and proper cupboard arrangement. Careful and systematic analysis of her own situation is necessary if the household manager is to benefit from a study of standard practice presupposing conditions varying greatly from her own. It is likely, however, that working conditions in homes will in time be more standardized. In addition those studying household tasks may extend their study to a greater variety of situations. Both of these changes will result in a larger group of housewives benefiting by a study of those tasks where the tools used and working conditions greatly influence method.

The small scale of household production affects the introduction of scientific methods in yet another way. If the best method involves important changes, the household manager must take time and put forth effort to acquaint herself thoroughly with it, and perhaps go through a very awkward learning process, during which her efficiency would be even less than formerly. Because of the awkwardness experienced in attempting to learn the new method she may feel that after all the old method was best. Or she may recognize that the new method is better but it may not seem worth while especially since the net advantage of any single improvement in a small-scale operation may not be very great.

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[9] *Ibid.*, p. 313.

Scientific management in household production as a whole is not only affected by the handicaps imposed on household managers who desire to improve their methods, but is limited by women who feel no urge to increase their efficiency. Their attitude may be due to lack of intelligence, to lack of interest in the tasks at hand, or to the fact that the pressure of work is so light that improved methods would net no special advantage. Some housewives are not able to grasp the importance of the principles and rules advocated and the changes suggested. Much of the improvement must come through a demonstration of benefits in the homes of more enterprising neighbors.

IS SCIENTIFIC MANAGEMENT DESIRABLE?

To question the desirability of scientific management exposes one to the ridicule of some people. Yet there are those who honestly wonder whether housewives ought to strive for maximum efficiency in production. A discussion of homemaking at a conference conducted by Teachers College revealed that some homemakers felt that certain values might be lost if the housewife should try to be scientific in her methods. Others felt that such an opinion ignored the fact that "scientific management might relieve the wife and mother of much routine, drudgery and give her leisure for fuller and more creative life."[10]

Fears in regard to the effect of scientific management in household production may, in part, be due to the fact that in much of the discussion of "scientific management" the emphasis has usually been placed on certain elements of the job, dishwashing, window cleaning, and other such isolated tasks, rather than on the job as a whole. These fears are partly due to the failure to recognize that management is scientific only so far as it provides the most efficient method of attaining the ends desired. These ends are not simple. They usually include more than the desire to produce the separate goods at a minimum "cost." Other things are important: the total effect of goods and services provided in the home, the satisfaction the worker gets because of the time or the method of production, the fatigue of the worker due to length of working period and method used, the worker's participation in group relations at the time of work, or after the work is completed.

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[10] *Homemaking As a Center of Research,* pp. 2-3. See also "The Pros and Cons of Efficiency in the Household," *J. H. Ec.,* XX, pp. 337-9.

CHAPTER XII

DOES FAMILY PRODUCTION PAY?

In an economic society dominated by ideas of profit and loss, it behooves us to inquire whether family production pays. How shall such a question be approached? Since family labor is unpaid and home-produced goods are not sold a judgment in this matter cannot be rendered in dollars and cents. It is clear, though, that a method or way of producing a good pays if no more economical one can be found. So we ask: Can a more economical method be found for providing the goods or utilities which families produce for themselves? Some people will reply, "Yes indeed." Müller-Lyer, for one, states:

> Cooking, laundry-work, mending, scrubbing, and retail buying have not been kept in the hands of the household out of necessity, nor because they are most appropriately or efficiently attended to in the household, but by the might of old custom and human mental laziness.[1]

The writer further maintains that *"Everything can be bought more cheaply than it can be made outside the factory."*[2]

Before passing judgment on the wisdom of the family providing certain things for themselves one thing must be remembered. Waste and economy can be judged only with reference to the ends which are desired. So long as families desire to live in independent homes and eat at a family table, the economy of boarding homes or a central community dining-room has no place in a consideration of possible alternatives which might eliminate waste. It may be that such things are pleasing merely because we have been taught to find them so and because we are unaware of other possibilities. "Waste" might be eliminated and resources used to "better" advantage if a bureaucratic government decided what people should have, and produced and rationed it accordingly. Waste and economy will, however, be considered here with reference to what families seem to desire. Nothing could be more wasteful than to produce what is not wanted.

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[1] *The Family,* p. 326.

[2] *Ibid.,* p. 243.

One other error must also be avoided. It must be borne in mind that production is more than the creation of form utility. Machines and minute specialization have brought enormous savings in manufacturing. But before production is complete a good must have time, place, and possession utility as well. It is the economy of the entire process of production which must be evaluated.

Not all direct production carried on by the household members needs be questioned. The economy of some activities is undisputed, for example, some shopping and purchasing by members of the family. We here are concerned especially with household production which interferes with gainful employment. If the household production supplements gainful employment, and interferes in no way with the productive capacity of those gainfully employed, then its economy is taken for granted, unless it be that another worker can do the task so much more efficiently that the idleness of the released worker cannot be looked upon as a loss.

Present practice, that is, what families are at present doing, throws some light on what is most economical from the family point of view. We have already noted that in the United States in 1930 approximately 14 per cent of women classed as homemakers were gainfully employed. The other 86 per cent were for the most part engaged in full-time household production.

We cannot assume, however, that families at all times utilize the labor of their members in order to secure for themselves the greatest return in economic goods; nor that they rationally seek their greatest economic advantage. Custom and the desire for leisure prevent women from seeking gainful work even though the real income of the family might be increased thereby. Moreover, among certain women economy is not the motive for gainful employment.

WHY WIVES SEEK GAINFUL WORK

Reasons for gainful work have been studied for a few groups of wives and mothers. Collier, in a study of 100 "successful" married women who continued their professional work after marriage, found that only 38 gave "financial necessity" as one of their reasons. Some of the others might have felt that their labor could have been more economically used in gainful employment even though "financial necessity" did not force it. Only 8 of the 38 gave financial necessity as the only reason for their gainful work. An outlet for energy was sought by 87 out of the 100; for 48 of these it was the sole reason given. Twenty-two women gave as a reason, "the desire to enrich life."[3]

One gets a very different picture from studies of other groups. Among industrial mothers in Philadelphia, Hughes found that only 63 out of 725 were working from personal preference.[4] The Women's Bureau is of the opinion that:

> Whatever may be the extent of their earning capacity, whatever may be the irregularity of their employment, married women are in industry for one purpose and, generally speaking, for one purpose only—to provide necessities for their families or to raise their standard of living.[5]

A recent study has been made of the gainful work of rural women in a county in Rhode Island. Of 408 homemakers earning, 71.4 per cent were working for pay because they needed the money. Decisions in regard to the families' need were based not only on the women's statements but also on the investigator's knowledge of the families' financial situation. Other motives for working were not reported.[6]

Some women stay at home when a transfer of a part of their time to gainful work would increase the family's real income. Others, because of personal preference, may seek gainful employment even though real income is thereby decreased. On the whole, though, present family practice is fairly conclusive evidence that direct production is looked upon as economical by the family. We must, however, not base our case for economy on this alone.

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[3] *Marriage and Careers,* p. 13.

[4] *Mothers in Industry,* p. 31.

[5] Mary N. Winslow, *Married Women in Industry,* Women's Bur. Bul. 38, p. 4.

[6] M. Whittemore, "Wage-earning Homemakers and the Family Income," *J. H. Ec.,* 23 (1931, Nov.), 998-1001.

HOW THE WIFE'S GAINFUL WORK AFFECTS FAMILY'S REAL INCOME

In Chapter VII we found that the higher the income, the larger the family, the younger the children, the less likely were married women to be gainfully employed. It seems safe to assume then that the lower the income, the smaller the family, the older the children, the more does the wife's and mother's gainful work add to the real income.

In a large family the woman's contribution through household production is greater than where the group is small. For one thing she usually works longer hours. Substitutes for her labor tend to be more costly. Performing household tasks is likely to be the most valuable contribution she can make.[7]

When children are small, continuous care is necessary and satisfactory substitutes are few and costly. Gainful work is thus limited. Care by the mother may seem imperative even though there is great need for a larger money income. Only gainful work which can be done at home is undertaken. So even among low-income families few mothers with infants work outside the home.

Social agencies believe that mother's care of small children is economical. "It has of late years become a generally accepted principle among all those interested in child and family welfare, that the mother of a family of small children upon whom the health and well-being of the children largely depend, must devote her time and attention to them and not be employed outside the house."[8] When the income is very low the mother may consider that even though the children are greatly in need of her continual care yet the need for money to provide food and shelter is still more pressing. The social agency usually considers it better to provide the money needed for necessaries, and have the mother remain at home with the children. Substitute care by a paid worker is frequently very expensive, and the paid worker is not always willing, as is the mother, to perform other household tasks.

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[7] The greater importance of the woman's unpaid work in larger families is suggested in the study of 195 farm homemakers in New York state. The women were asked to place a value on their own work. In families with cash receipts below $750, the average size of family was 3.6 persons, and the homemakers' unpaid work was valued at $959. For those homes whose cash receipts were $3,750 and over, there were 5.2 persons in the household and the homemaker's work was valued at $1,206 (Cornell Agr. Exp. Sta. Bul. 522, p. 74).

The influence of family income on the gainful employment of married women is very important. Once there is sufficient money income for necessaries, the comforts and amenities best provided by the wife through household production are often preferred to additional purchasing power. As income increases, many tasks are delegated. Time spent in household tasks may be short. The homemaker may find that there is "little" which interferes with gainful employment. But that little may be a real barrier. A domestic worker might be hired. The service she renders may be unsatisfactory because she may be less familiar with or less interested in the family's special likes and dislikes or she may be less skilled in catering to them. As a consequence the house may seem less attractive and favorite dishes may be less frequently served than when the woman carried on the tasks herself or had considerable time for supervision. This difference in quality may appear to outsiders to be of minor importance, yet its contribution to the satisfaction of the family's needs may be much greater than would result from the increase in money income due to the housewife's gainful work. When the money income is large the family can afford to indulge in such luxuries which, after all, may be most economically provided by a member of the family.

The smaller proportion of gainfully employed women in the higher- than in the lower-income groups is also due to the fact that if the money income is sufficiently great the woman's contribution either in the home or as a gainful worker diminishes, and the relative advantage of leisure becomes greater. If the woman finds special satisfaction in the productive work which she might carry on, she may prefer work to leisure. But the opportunity which the work affords, rather than the greater economy of this use of her time, is the determining factor.

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[8] Leila Houghteling, *The Income and Standard of Living of Unskilled Laborers in Chicago,* p. 52.

Gainfully employed women seem to fall into three categories, or combinations of these three, with respect to their contribution to real income. In the first group are those who, on becoming gainful workers, relinquish household production to only a limited extent. A considerable portion of their leisure time and that of other members of the family is sacrificed. Preparing meals, cleaning, washing, and mending are late evening tasks. In fact, this is what happens in most families where the gainful work of the wife is very advantageous. A marked increase in the real income occurs, for not only are much the same goods being produced at home, but the larger money income makes additional purchases possible. This increase is secured, however, at the sacrifice of leisure which may be necessary for the health and normal development of individuals and for sound family and community life.

In the second group are women who discontinue much of their household production on becoming gainful workers. Part of the money income earned goes to replace some of the services previously performed and a part to goods not formerly provided. The extent to which former goods are replaced will depend largely on the earnings of the woman. In only a few instances is the money income received sufficiently large that the mother is able to have a surplus after providing from her earnings goods similar in character to those produced by her as a full-time worker in the home. Although some services previously enjoyed are no longer provided the woman by her gainful work may be able to provide goods which appear more necessary for the welfare of the group.

There are, however, a few women who, by becoming gainful workers, are able to increase the real income of the group without sacrificing, to any appreciable extent, either their own leisure or that of the other members of their households. That is, for every unit of labor transferred from household production to gainful work the net returns are sufficient to yield money income to provide the goods formerly used. In a few cases there is a surplus. It occurs mainly when the earnings of women are much above the average. Certain professional women are likely to have such incomes. Collier tells, however, of one woman who found that even with professional training and skill it took her about a year to organize her working power before it brought in sufficient income to cover extra service costs.

When Frances Perkins was commissioner of the New York State Department of Labor she expressed the opinion that unless a married woman who had children could earn $3,500 a year she should stay at home and be a full-time mother. This statement is of interest as an estimate of the cost of substitutes for services rendered to the family by a woman with children. The statement must, however, be interpreted with care. Even if true for New York it may not apply elsewhere. Moreover, it is not equally true for all income groups. Even low earnings will yield some families necessaries and luxuries not otherwise available. What is sacrificed when the mother becomes a gainful worker may not seem so important as the additions secured. Moreover, the standard as set up by Perkins overlooks the fact that one reason for the high cost of substitutes for certain household tasks is that agencies for performing them are relatively undeveloped. In time better and less costly services may be available to replace things now done in the home.[9]

The marked tendency to engage in work which combines readily with household production is further evidence of the advantage of continuing many customary household tasks. Keeping boarders and lodgers is a common means of contributing to money income.

HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION SMALL-SCALE, UNSPECIALIZED AND NON-COMPETITIVE

In evaluating the relative economy of household production it is helpful to examine characteristics which indicate waste and those which suggest that household production is economical.

The small-scale, unspecialized character of household production leads to two kinds of waste: first, incorrect methods and unskillful performance, and, second, idle equipment. Wealth is largely dependent on the advantages taken of co-operation and division of labor. The possibility of increasing the quantity of goods, improving their quality, and lowering their costs by specialization and large-scale centralized production has been amply demonstrated. Many people look upon division of labor as the economic foundation of modern civilized society. Yet women giving full time to unspecialized household tasks approximate a third of all the workers.

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[9] "Part-time Mothers" (Editorial), *Soc. Service Rev.* 4 (1930), 295-6.

Black, writing in England at the close of the World War, was particularly interested in the waste due to the inefficient use of resources in household production. She considered that the maintenance of so many kitchens was a national extravagance and deplored the waste of small-scale buying by housewives who could never attain the efficiency of the commercial buyer. She looked upon household production as a primitive undeveloped trade which lacked the advantage of combined industry, machines on a large scale, and the economy of production which depends on such developments. In that time of national need she challenged householders "to ask themselves whether they had a right to carry on their affairs in a manner so disproportionately extravagant."[10] Richards in the opening sentence of her book *The Cost of Living*, says:

> In these days of consolidation for the purpose of cutting down expenses, days of close calculation of cost, when everything is reduced to a money basis in production, it is not surprising that discussion should have arisen over the great waste involved in the keeping up of fifty kitchen-fires to do the work that five would do; in the time given to the marketing for one family which might serve for fifty.

Competition is looked upon as a powerful force increasing efficiency. Yet this is absent from the household. The housewife does not have to seek other employment if the quantity or quality of her production falls below a certain standard. The efficiency of other households and other workers does not endanger her position. She thus lacks a common incentive which stimulates the gainful worker to increase his efficiency or at least to maintain a certain standard.

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[10] *The New Housekeeping*, p. 15.

Much waste in household production occurs because of a lag between scientific knowledge and practice. The housewife finds it impossible to evolve "best" methods for herself, and almost if not quite impossible, to keep informed of scientific findings which would aid her in the various tasks. As a worker she has special difficulty in breaking her own bad habits of work and developing the skill with the new methods. This lag of scientific knowledge behind practice is greatly increased by those women who have no urge to improve their ways, who are quite content to dawdle, spending perhaps twice as long at their tasks as is necessary and turning out products far below "acceptable" standards.

A special form of waste inevitably accompanies household production, because workers of widely different aptitudes and training perform the same tasks. The unspecialized character of the work itself is partly but not entirely responsible. Also, many women become household workers not because they are best fitted for it or have chosen it as an occupation but because with marriage comes responsibility for certain household tasks.

Waste occurs not only because many of the workers are unsuited to household production and hence perform the tasks badly but also because many of the workers might have made a greater productive contribution elsewhere. Married women have relatively little freedom of choice of occupation. Taussig says: "The removal of all artificial barriers to choice of occupation is the most important goal for society. Given this, the innate faculties of all will be brought to bear, and all will bring to the social dividend whatever it is in them to contribute."[11] Added to variations in innate capacity and natural aptitudes are differences in training and experience before the worker comes to the job. In many cases specialized capacities have been developed. Much of this value is lost when the woman becomes an unspecialized household worker. Since women are sharing more and more in higher education, and are entering professions where the period of training is long, it is probable that the loss to society due to their failure to continue in their specialized work is on the increase. In general it may be said that social waste is involved in every failure to have work done by the person, man or woman, who is best able to do it.

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[11] *Principles of Economics,* 1st ed., II, 142.

Another very similar waste is that occurring during woman's early years of gainful work. During this period most women either consciously or unconsciously consider that present work is only temporary, that they will shortly be leaving it to assume responsibility for household tasks. This affects the preparation of the worker for, and her diligence in, her job.

IDLENESS OF HOUSEWIVES A SOURCE OF WASTE

Another source of great waste may be found, it is alleged, in the increasing volume of unused labor power among housewives. Schreiner and Pruette have vigorously assailed the economy of the present system of production on the grounds that homekeeping women have excessive leisure and that this results in great social loss. Schreiner, writing in 1911, saw female parasitism threatening the masses:

> In the history of the past the dangers of sex-parasitism have never threatened more than a small section of the females of the human race, those exclusively of some dominant race or class; the mass of women beneath them being still compelled to assume many forms of strenuous activity. It is at the present day, and under the peculiar conditions of our modern civilization, that for the first time sex-parasitism has become a danger, more or less remote, to the mass of civilized women, perhaps ultimately to all.[12]

Pruette holds that idle women "are a mark, not only of their husbands' ability to keep them in comfort, not only of 'vicarious consumption,' but of social inefficiency, of society's failure adequately to make use of its human material."[13] Schreiner believes that the danger is most imminent for the rich; and Pruette sees in particular the urban homemaker who is "not giving her time to a young child."

Opinions concerning the extent of idleness are usually based on the manner of living of a somewhat limited group and on certain conspicuous changes which have occurred. Schreiner sees woman's ancient fields of domestic labor slipping from her without new fields either in the home or outside opening up to her. According to Pruette: "The Industrial Revolution threw women out of a job." She considers that as a result: "Some women are without any job at all, some on no better than a quarter- or a half-time job." The majority of women are, she considers, enjoying "unexampled leisure."

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[12] *Woman and Labor,* p. 77.

[13] *Women and Leisure,* p. xiii.

When thinking of the leisure of homekeeping women all homemakers should not be considered as a single group. There are the rich and the poor; the urban and the rural; those with many persons in their households and those with only a few; those with infants and young children to care for, and those with all children in school or only adult members in the household; and finally there are those whose family standard of living makes great demands on their labor and those whose families accept readily market substitutes for household production or whose standards of home care and service leave her comparatively free.

The Lynds classified Middletown housewives according to the length of their working day. There were three categories:

> The few to whom housework is a minor concern engaging but an incidental part of each day; the large group who by careful management fit everything somehow into the morning and an afternoon hour or two and contrive to keep many afternoons and evenings relatively free for the children, social life, and civic activities; and finally the group, as large as or larger than the second, for whom each day is a nip-and-tuck race to accomplish the absolute essentials between morning and bedtime, with occasional afternoons and evenings free only by planning in advance.[14]

As money income increases, certain tasks are delegated. But even where a full-time servant is hired the woman may still be very busy with household tasks. As income increases further so also will her leisure. But the money income must be very high or the standard of living relatively low or the family very small for the woman to be exempt entirely, or even largely, from productive labor. This does occur in very high-income families.

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[14] *Middletown,* pp. 168-9.

The rich constitute, however, only a small fraction of the total population, and idleness in this group, though conspicuous, affects but little the average time spent by homemakers as a whole.

Idleness is likely to be greater among urban than farm women. Urban women have fewer children and more labor-saving devices than rural women nor have they farm work or other similar gainful work which can readily be combined with household tasks.

The presence of young children in the family in almost every instance increases greatly the household tasks and leaves little leisure for the mother. Thus for a period the housewife is a very busy person. The length of her busy period depends on the number of children, the length of time they are cared for in the home, and the hired services utilized. The birth-rate is declining, so fewer women, at any one time, have the responsibility for child care and training; and the average period of time during which child care is important is now shorter. Monroe found, however, that fewer than one-fifth of the married women in the Chicago families studied had escaped the burdens of child rearing.[15] She also found that 14 years was the average period during which a woman had children under seven years, and for practically one-fifth of the mothers it was 20 years or longer.[16] In 1920, 41 per cent of Chicago white families had children under seven years of age and 18 per cent had children under two.[17]

The size of family and household also reveals the burden of housekeeping responsibility. Among unbroken white families in Chicago in 1920, 30 per cent of the families had five or more members.[18] Women with preschool children and families of five or more members to care for probably constitute at least 50 per cent of the population.

Not until recently have we had any data concerning the leisure of homekeeping women. Such data as are published are representative chiefly of rural women and to a lesser extent of town and city homemakers.

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[15] *Chicago Families,* p. 265.

[16] *Ibid.,* p. 137.

[17] *Ibid.,* pp. 135-6.

[18] *Ibid.,* p. 234. "The family in this investigation is a group of persons living together and having marital or parent-child relationship. . . . The household is the larger related group, since it includes, in addition to the members of the family, any persons living in the home who are related by blood or by marriage."

Kneeland, in her study of the homemaker's use of time, found that five-sixths of the homemakers from whom records were secured "spent over 42 hours a week in their homemaking, more than half spent over 48 hours, and one-third spent over 56 hours." The average time spent in homemaking by the women in cities of from 2,500 to 50,000 was 51 hours a week, only a few minutes less than the rural figure.[19] Records have also been secured from 222 homemakers in cities having a population over 250,000. These were women whose husbands were in business or the professions. The average time spent by this group in homemaking was 45 hours a week.[20]

From the study of Oregon homemakers we also learn how the time spent by the woman varied with family composition. The farm homemakers with no children spent on the average 45 hours in homemaking activities; for those with all children six and over, the average was 51 hours per week. When the youngest was between one and six the average was 56 hours; and when the youngest child was under one the average time rose to 69 hours.

In many cases farm work and other tasks were added to homemaking to increase the length of the working day and reduce leisure. Kneeland found that farm homemakers on the average added in this way 9.6 hours to their working week, and in the larger cities the wives of business and professional men averaged 2.4 hours a week at "other work."[21]

These data do not suggest excessive leisure. It must be remembered, however, that in the working time were included the care of the woman's personal clothing and the shopping for goods intended specially for her own use and "fancy work" which in many cases may have been looked upon as a leisure activity. Other workers would perform such tasks as these after hours of gainful employment. Also the woman lives at the place of work, and any time spent coming and going from the market is included in the total time. These data, moreover, throw no light on the potential leisure of these women: that is, the amount of time spent dawdling because of absence of pressure to maximize output, because leisure time free from homemaking activities is not especially desired, because the women were accustomed to work for a certain number of hours, or because of failure to introduce better methods of work. Much less time might have been spent at household tasks had an incentive to increase efficiency been present.

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[19] "Is the Modern Housewife a Lady of Leisure?" *Survey,* LXII (1929), 301.

[20] Pres. Conf. on Home Building and Home Ownership, Vol. IX, p. 28.

[21] *Ibid.*

The importance of idleness or time entirely free from work cannot be measured in hours alone. Its extent among any group of women can be measured by contrasting their hours of labor with the labor hours of the other adult members of their families. Few data are available for such a comparison. Kirkpatrick, in studying farm standards of living, found that "the average length of the operator's work day . . . is 11.3 hours. . . . The average length of the homemaker's work day . . . is 11.4 hours."[22] Though these figures are not in accord with the more careful studies of the homemaker's use of time, yet they do indicate that the working day of the man and the woman on the farm are probably very similar. To the hours of gainful employment should be added the time spent in coming and going from work and in any shopping and other household tasks carried on. Then only is the working week of a gainful worker comparable to the working time of homekeeping women.

The housewife may appear to have more leisure than she really has merely because many of her leisure hours come when others are busy. She usually works during many of their free hours.

Further studies will have to be made before a comprehensive picture can be presented of the leisure time for homekeeping women. It seems highly probable that on the whole it is increasing, and will become even more marked during certain periods of the life history of the family unless more women still further combine gainful employment with household production.

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[22] "The Farmer's Standard of Living," U. S. Dept. of Agri. Dept. Bul. 1466 (1926), p. 48.

Before leaving this discussion of the waste due to unused labor power in household production, it should be pointed out that dawdling does not necessarily cease with a transfer of the worker to gainful employment. Gainful work does not automatically fill the worker with zeal and enthusiasm for the task to be performed so that his labor is used to the fullest capacity. Soldiering on the job is an outstanding problem in certain types of industry.

HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION HAS ADVANTAGES OVER COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION

We have been examining evidences of waste. Let us turn now to conditions which suggest that household production is economical.

Household production has one advantage which compensates in many instances for the greater costs of manufacture: namely, the good is manufactured at the place of consumption and by the group for whose use it is intended. As a result there are no costs of transportation of the finished product, of storage and selling, and no waste from overproduction due to the separation of producer and consumer. The larger the scale of production the less may be the cost of manufacture, but the larger also is the group of consumers using the goods produced, and the greater the cost of distributing it.

Certain forms of waste are eliminated also in household production because production and consumption are perfectly adjusted. The aim of production should be to provide goods for the consumer; production should not be looked upon as an end in itself. The separation of the producer and the consumer in commercial production is responsible for a social philosophy conducive to waste: the "buy to keep business going," the "make work" idea. This philosophy is fostered by those wishing to increase their sales. They desire that goods should be consumed or discarded quickly so that the buying of goods to take their place will keep factories busy. Goods are largely produced without regard for durability, except in those cases where that quality is specially demanded and the buyer is in a position to recognize it and insist upon having it. With profit as the motive much labor is wasted also by competitive advertising and other means of attracting sales which do not increase the benefit to consumers. Labor is also wasted in elaborating ways and means of deceiving customers and making the goods appear better than they really are. Such forms of waste cannot flourish in household production.

Idle labor, moreover, is not confined to household production. Much seasonal and cyclical unemployment occurs, when 10 per cent, or even more, of the gainful workers are out of work. This idleness causes enormous wastes. Household producers are not subject to this kind of unemployment.

There is no gainsaying the economics of mass or centralized production for a large body of goods. However, certain types of consumer's goods do not lend themselves to either of these: first, are those which must remain in the house, for example, bed-making, dusting, and the final preparation and serving of food; and second, the goods which are too perishable to stand storage and transportation after the manufacture is complete, e.g., some kinds of cooked foods. They must be used at once, hence must be completed at the place of consumption. Furthermore, constant attention to individual needs, preferences, likes and dislikes is necessary in many instances if the resulting goods are to be satisfactory. This cannot be done when producer and consumer are widely separated, nor can individual preferences have a place in mass production.

When utilities cannot be produced *en masse* or by centralized production, the alternative to household production is a paid worker, or workers, who carry on tasks in much the same manner, with greater or less efficiency than members of the household. No economic gain occurs from the transfer of a task to another agency or worker unless it is thereby more efficiently performed; this occurs only if the number of workers is reduced, or the tasks can be performed by less skilled workers, or the quality of the good is improved. In addition, the released labor must be turned to work where it is at least as productive as in the household.

If the majority of tasks not lending themselves to mass or centralized production were performed by paid workers some reduction in the number of workers might occur. This would be possible if the workers were so organized that each had full-time work, hence could perform the tasks of two or more former part-time homemakers. But many of the tasks which do not lend themselves to mass or centralized production are spread throughout the day. They cannot all be performed in the morning or in the afternoon, even though four hours per day is the total time required. This fact limits the economy of transferring certain tasks to paid workers who, in order to perform them, would either have to spend much time coming and going from the place of work, or would be idle during the same periods as was the housewife when she performed them.

It is the economy of the household performance of those tasks which do not lend themselves to mass or centralized production which seems to be a basic reason for so many full-time household workers. These tasks alone often do not constitute a full-time job. But since they usually require the worker's presence in the home other productive activities are added in order to spread overhead costs over a greater volume of production. Even though commercial laundries have demonstrated their efficiency in washing certain kinds of fabrics, yet in close proximity to them are homes where all the household washing is performed in a very primitive fashion. Household production can still compete with large-scale production because labor costs need not be charged against many of the goods produced.

CAN THE WOMAN FIND SATISFACTORY GAINFUL WORK?

But why, it may be asked, do household workers not perform only these tasks where the economy of household production is "real," and turn the remainder of their labor to paid work, and utilize more fully commercial products and services? In order to answer this question we must examine the difficulties standing in the way of such a transfer of labor. They are many and varied. Some, such as ideas about woman's customary rôle, the disinclination of certain women to full-time work, the lack of initiative in seeking out new ways of adding to the family income, legal restrictions, and the prejudices of employers concerning the hiring of married women, are real obstacles. Other difficulties are inherent in the nature and extent of those household tasks which may be advantageously performed by the members, and in the character of the labor market in which the worker must sell her services, if she is going to combine gainful work with household production. These too may change in time.

We have already noted that household production is very economical for certain tasks; these are not always a full-time job. Household production is complicated by the fact that their importance varies throughout the life history of the family. The lowest point in the volume of these very worthwhile tasks probably comes before the children are born and after they are grown. During these periods all tasks except management, market selection, and a limited amount of food preparation and cleaning can readily be delegated to large-scale or centralized productive agencies. Some help can usually be secured, without excessive cost, for some of the cleaning and food preparation. Then with the aid of her husband in certain tasks the wife often feels that she can undertake full-time gainful work. But the volume of household tasks which she feels it is economical to carry on changes. In the majority of cases, the woman must at some time relinquish most of her gainful work, for example, when the children are young. She may at that time have to devote herself exclusively to household duties.

This change increases the difficulty of finding an outlet in gainful employment for the idle or less essential hours of home-keeping women. Breaks in gainful work affect the woman's ability in special fields. Among Chicago families fourteen years was the average period from the birth of the first child to the time when the youngest child went to school, and for practically one-fifth of the mothers it was twenty years or longer. "The young woman who leaves her job to marry at twenty-five may not find re-entry to the field of earning an easy matter when her last child is seven years old and she is forty."[23] The woman's bargaining power has probably decreased considerably. She may no longer be so well trained as formerly, and she has doubtless lost many of her former contacts. The unskilled worker is perhaps less affected by the break than the skilled and professional woman, but with the increasing demand for youth and speed she also, on her return to gainful employment, finds it very difficult to sell her services.

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[23] D. Monroe, *Chicago Families,* p. 266.

Even if full-time work seems feasible the worker is hampered by a home responsibility which probably claims more of her time and attention than is the case with other workers. Her work is more likely to be interrupted by emergencies. In many instances only part-time work is possible. Besides she may be free only at certain hours.

With these factors affecting the kind of job she can accept, the woman faces a limited market. She is hampered in regard to her mobility. The husband is the principal earner of money income, hence it is his work which establishes the family domicile. She must live at home and, if part-time work is desired, it must be near at hand; otherwise the time spent in transportation would greatly reduce the advantage of gainful work. If she is a young married woman she is likely to have difficulty in getting a position where a permanent worker is desired. The larger the city the greater is the variety of possible jobs and the wider her market. In small towns the field for gainfully employed women is often exceedingly limited.

And what are the consequences? Full-time work suited to the worker's ability may be available and it may even have the requisite flexibility to make it ideal. But this seldom happens: first, because of the limitations of her market, and second, because full-time jobs with freedom to meet household emergencies as they arise are very scarce. And part-time jobs are probably almost as scarce, for gainful production is on the whole geared to a full-time day. If part-time work is to be had, the hours may not be suited to the free time of the worker.

One of the criticisms made of household production is that it fails to utilize the capabilities of the workers. But in many instances the gainful work to which the married woman turns her labor affords no better outlet for her talents than the household tasks which she relinquished. College wives at times give up positions for which they were trained and accept work combining more readily with the household duties.

The difficulties of combining gainful work and household tasks have been brought out in a study of college wives who work. The writer reaches the following conclusion: "The six requisites for the happy combination of a professional pursuit with married life are (1) a husband's active co-operation, (2) health to stand the strain of conflicting interests, (3) adequate household assistance, (4) training and experience before marriage, (5) work with short or adjustable hours, (6) complex arrangements for the children."[24] Such a combination seems so unlikely that if one accepts this judgment it would be safe to say that few women can happily combine a professional pursuit with married life and children.

No job to which household producers may turn can be more readily combined with their customary tasks than the keeping of boarders and lodgers. The quantity of work undertaken may be adjusted to the time released from household production, and preoccupation in customary household tasks does not reduce the capacity of the woman in this work. This is undoubtedly the reason why such a high proportion of those "gainfully employed" are keeping lodgers. Moreover, such gainful work does not conflict with custom.

As a group, farm homemakers probably find less difficulty than any other group in combining gainful work with household production. Farm work can be adjusted readily to the changing burden of household tasks, to family emergencies, and can in part be combined with child care and training. Enterprises conducted by other independent entrepreneurs, such as shopkeepers, often afford an opportunity for a woman to assist her husband during "free" hours. The growth of chain stores is probably bringing a decline in joint enterprises of the husband and wife.

When helping her husband the woman is fairly certain of an opportunity to use her "free" time and is assured of the required flexibility of work; but she is not thereby afforded a chance to do that work for which she is specially fitted. It is her husband's occupation which determines her opportunity.

There are, to be sure, a few favored women, for example, some writers and artists, whose opportunity is not dependent upon a certain volume of production during a given period of time. In such cases labor can be freely directed into those channels where the production will be the greatest.

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[24] Anne B. Kennon, "College Wives Who Work," *J. Am. Assn. of Univ. Women,* XX (1927), 105.

These difficulties in transferring a part of the labor of the housewife to gainful employment are significant, for the net gain from any reduction in household production is largely dependent on the use made of the released household labor.

In general we can conclude that it is economical for a mother with young children or a large family to be a full-time household worker. Three exceptions might be made: (1) where the income is extremely low, (2) where another adult in the home can take the mother's place, (3) where the woman's earning ability is high enough to pay a satisfactory substitute. For many families it is economical for the woman to give full time to household tasks merely because she cannot find gainful work which does not interfere with tasks for which no, or only very expensive, substitutes are available.

Part IV

HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION PROBLEMS

CHAPTER XIII

DIRECTING FAMILY CONSUMPTION

In the preceding chapters we have been dissecting household production in various ways and looking at it from different angles in order to see what it is like. Now we want to take our stand at the elbow of the household manager, to follow her through not only one busy or leisurely day but also through the changing weeks and years. By so doing we can get a picture of the management problems of the household.

CHOOSING GOODS AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Determining the consumption standard, that is, the way in which the family is to live, the goods to be used, the leisure activities to be enjoyed is the family's most important economic problem. Yet few families give to it the attention it deserves. It is easy to become so absorbed in increasing the stock of goods as to forget the more important tasks (1) of choosing wisely what goods are to be procured and (2) of planning desirable leisure activities. Absorption in production and narrowness of interests are frequent criticisms of American life. A blind faith seems to exist both in families and communities that given sufficient wealth wise consumption and welfare will follow.

Perhaps the first and most important thing a family should do is to make a list of things they want to achieve or want to experience. These could be stated in terms of health, formal education in home and school, beauty, convenience, comfort and privacy in the home, freedom to experiment at home with plants or handicrafts, fun in family life around the fireside, in special festivals, in being free to bring in friends. Such a list if one drawn up and revised from time to time would result in more conscious direction of choices, and less aimless drifting.

Conscious direction of consumption is more needed at the present time than ever before. The variety of goods and ways of using leisure has greatly increased. The possibility of wrong choice has been multiplied, and the difficulty of securing unity and harmony in consumption is enlarged. Customs and conventions on which families tend to rely are in a state of flux. People are continually making contacts with new groups and new ideas affecting their standards. Perhaps most important of all is the inescapable contact with advertising. Everywhere goods are painted in glowing colors and praised in extravagant terms. Appeals are made and human emotion excited in an effort to break down consumer resistance and increase sales. A consumer who does not take thought of his own interests will find his consumption narrowed to or at least concentrated on those goods most strikingly advertised. A composite picture of advertising does not present what can be looked upon as well-balanced consumption for many families. Insufficient attention has been given, for example, to family recreation in the home, to community recreation, and to beautiful gardens. The family needs to protect itself by seeking other sources of information.

In the midst of a flood of new goods and suggestions regarding their uses the consumer is likely to be somewhat bewildered. One cannot take time to try out every good and all uses of leisure time. More than ever before the consumer benefits from deliberation in regard to his choices. Deliberation is really a mental experiment. In your mind are tried out various possibilities to see which one is best. Only by experimenting this way can money and time be directed to the most important uses.

Some people's choices are so fixed by habit and custom that they give them little thought. For other people, choice is a perplexing problem. They feel that it is something to be labored over and brought to perfection. A wise consumer in making his choices does not rely on the self-interest of those with goods to sell, nor yet on the dictates of custom and convention. His choice-making he approaches as an adventurer seeking new experiences, as an artist who realizes that in consumption his life is portrayed and through it many of his hopes may be realized.

THE WOMAN AS DIRECTOR OF CONSUMPTION

Very frequently the housewife is spoken of as director of family consumption, and to a certain extent she is. She, more than anyone else, chooses the goods used by the family, arranges leisure time activities, and plans the social life of the family and their participation in community life. Choosing is in large part, however, an individual consumer activity. If goods used and leisure activities are to be in any way an expression of individuality some choice-making must be carried on by each individual for himself. Only in the rôle of a co-operator not a dictator can one person be of real service in directing family consumption. This rendering of service to others in choice-making is a productive activity.

The function of the woman or any member of the family who aids in choice-making is fourfold: (1) to help discover the needs and desires of members, e.g., in meeting people, in sports, music; (2) to co-operate with individuals in searching out possible ways of meeting needs and desires; (3) to assist in harmonizing group interests; and (4) to carry choice to the point of selecting specific goods or leisure activities.

None of these functions is simple. Discovering the needs and desires of a member of a family may be a matter of overcoming a shyness or reluctance to state his desire. Or it may be necessary to discover potential needs of which even the individual may not be aware, e.g., the need for more music, more color, more social life. Both of these call not only for interest in and understanding of the individual but imagination and time to speculate and deliberate upon his capacities and possible enlargement of life.

Choices are mechanical and fall in narrow lines and rigid patterns largely because we are not familiar with the boundless possibilities which exist for meeting our needs. The woman on whom falls the responsibility of many choices and who, in many homes, is somewhat more free from pressure of work than other members can aid the others greatly by becoming acquainted with possible goods and seeking to perceive what these would contribute to the individual members and to the family as a whole. This also is a task calling for time, and an enterprising, imaginative spirit. But it holds untold possibilities for enriching life and increasing satisfactions.

Harmony of group interest is needed especially for goods and leisure shared in common. Conflicts may arise merely because the individuals do not agree as to what is most worth while. Gilbreth in speaking of this problem says: "We have not only 'the psychology of the total situation,' but the demands of each individual in the group, adjusted to each other."[1] She describes a conflict resulting from different attitudes toward table service. To some members of the family freedom from convention is most desirable, "They delight in the sociability of passing things around. To others it seems an irritating lack of refinement; and Sister's critical look means that she is remembering the way things are done at the Browns', or the perfect service she saw in the movies."[2]

Several factors tend to be effective in minimizing conflict, for example, thoughtfulness, unselfishness, a consideration of the rights of others, a desire to win the approbation of the group or certain members of the group. A conflict of desires calls for a study of the individual's rights in relation to the rights of others in the group. In addition, it may be necessary for the manager to attempt to modify the desires of certain members, and to make them appreciate the point of view of the others. The establishment of a sound *esprit de corps* may be very important. The actual participation by the members in many of the choices may aid the manager in directing choices into channels satisfactory to all.

The other function of the manager as choice-maker is to carry choices to the point of selecting specific goods. In many cases the family as a whole or individual members in the family have only a general idea of something they want, perhaps appetizing meals, comfortable well-designed furniture, or an evening's entertainment in the home. Minor decisions are left to the housewife. She is often wholly responsible for choices affecting younger members. Frequently the older children and adults have much to say about food, home furnishings, standards of order and cleanliness, matters which many feel are primarily the province of the housewife. In some homes, however, choosing goods for adult members, even to neckties and hats, is left almost entirely to the woman. Planning for the entertainment of guests and family parties may also be her responsibility.

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[1] *The Homemaker and Her Job,* p. 4.

[2] *Ibid.,* p. 10.

SOURCES OF HELP IN CHOICE-MAKING

Anyone serious about choice-making is interested in sources of help to which she may turn. To the thinking woman actively seeking to improve family choices many sources are available. These are of two types: first, scientific knowledge and the advice of experts regarding the usefulness of goods for various purposes; and second, customs and conventions and the experience of the family, community, and other people.

The household manager tends to use automatically the experience of her family and friends and also community customs and conventions. A real danger lies in too ready an acceptance of these. In this way choices may be too narrow. Custom has the sanction of the past and following it will prevent certain mistakes but it does not help the family to adapt their consumption to changed or different needs and new opportunities. Conventional choices have the approval of the community. Their strength and prevalence lie in people's response to imitation. Imitation of what? A survey of our fashions, fads, and other current conventions would not lead us to conclude that these express a profound knowledge of human needs.

There is nothing creative in a blind following of either custom or convention. Freedom to follow or depart from custom or convention is the first essential in wise choosing. This independence of thinking is not easy to achieve. To cultivate it deliberately one must be willing to give much time to her choices. A broad knowledge of how people live in other communities and countries helps break down the influence of narrow customs and conventions.

Wherever possible the manager should utilize science and expert advice. Science has revealed many secrets and mysteries, yet for the majority of goods it cannot direct us to those best suited to our needs. Hoyt believes: "After scientific knowledge has done for us the utmost that it is now capable of doing and indeed the utmost that we can forecast for it at present, it will have answered less than half the questions which we should like to have answered for directing our consumption on a scientific basis."[3] Scientific rules may be followed in the choice of foods for health, although, even here, continued research often contradicts previously established "scientific" rules. Choices in housing, clothing, furnishings, and child care can, in part, be based on science.

Expert advice is not confined to scientific rules. The specialist through wide knowledge of goods available and their various uses, and by his greater discrimination regarding the relative merit of each, is often able to give excellent advice even though his decisions are not based on science. The household manager may benefit from such advice in choosing a beautiful house, desirable furnishings, a well-designed dress, palatable food combinations, and the best books for children.

Expert advice and scientific knowledge may be available but the housewife may be ignorant of this fact or may not know where to find them. In some instances they are beyond her purse unless "free" service is provided. The cost is likely to be high where general rules and principles do not suffice, and where attention must be given to individual cases. If the knowledge needed for the proper choice of foods can be secured only from a nutrition specialist who studies individual cases, or the best methods of child training directly from a child psychologist, the special knowledge needed as a guide to choice is not likely to be available to many households.

Much helpful information is being made available, free or practically so, through clinics, newspapers, magazines, books, cinemas, and educational institutions of various sorts. Besides scientific rules and expert advice they disseminate much useless and even harmful advice. The woman being unspecialized cannot be expected to be competent to evaluate it, to distinguish the false from the genuine and the biased from the unbiased. The manufacturer lauds the qualities of his product and exaggerates the satisfactions to be derived. The buyer comes eventually to learn that "truth-in-advertising" is a kind of truth which includes special kinds of untruth. A homemaker may be perplexed by the conflict between the advice given at a lecture by a specialist in child behavior and that received over the back fence from her neighbor, who has "raised a flock of her own," and appears to be familiar with satisfactory ways of "bringing up children." Which is she to believe?

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[3] *The Consumption of Wealth*, p. 186.

Increased attention to consumption on the part of educational institutions and higher ethical standards in advertising would greatly aid in choice-making. Another important change is needed, that is, a realization of the need for more time and thought being given to consumption. Unless this occurs the family is bound by custom, or acts on impulse, and perhaps later laments the opportunities forever lost. Lack of thought-taking is responsible for wasted time and money. Another growing tendency, it seems, should be corrected. The direction of consumption should not be more and more delegated to the woman. She can contribute much to choice-making, and in most families she probably has failed to realize her opportunity. But a high standard of family consumption depends on the full cooperation of all members.

Families can get help in choosing from many sources. A high standard of consumption seems to depend most of all, however, on individuals seeking to understand their own needs, and those of other members of their family, and seeking the fulfilment of these in the goods they choose and the way they use their time. Progress in choice-making comes as individuals and families discover new goods or new combinations to meet old needs or perceive undeveloped needs and ways of meeting them.

CHAPTER XIV

EARNING AND SPENDING THE MONEY INCOME

Present family problems are to an increasing extent centered around the earning and spending of money income. First of all a family must decide on the one hand who should earn the family income and, on the other, who should carry on household production. Then they must decide how the money income is to be spent.

The question of who shall earn the money income is not a problem in all households. In many it is an accepted fact that the woman shall be responsible only for certain household tasks, and that children shall be almost or entirely free from obligation to earn until through grammar or high school or even college.

SHOULD THE WIFE AND MOTHER EARN?

The wife's earning is usually due to one of two things or to both: (1) relative scarcity of money and a comparative surplus of time, so that it seems advisable to use a part of this time to increase money income; and (2) the expectation that greater satisfaction can be derived from gainful work and earning than from the household tasks or leisure which must be given up.

How should the family face the question of the wife's gainful employment? In the first place effect on real income should be considered. The family should ask whether they would have more goods, or at least a greater supply of the more important, if the wife or mother earns. Whether they do will depend first on the woman's earnings; and second on what household tasks have to be discontinued and what money costs increased because the woman can give less time to household tasks. Often when the woman does gainful work a change occurs in standards of food service, order, cleanliness, entertainment in the home. The family should consider the loss in satisfaction from such a change. The increase in additional things bought with money income may, however, more than counterbalance such a loss.

Long-run as well as short-run effects should be considered. The woman's gainful work may have an indirect effect on the earning capacity of other members. The extra household tasks which they are called upon to perform may interfere, in time, with their efficiency and possible advancement. The earnings of the husband may be influenced in a more subtle way. To have his wife earning, he may consider, is a reflection on his ability. He may become discontented and less ambitious because of his lessened family responsibility. These effects are hard to determine, but such possibilities should be faced by all families contemplating the gainful employment of the wife. On the other hand, another factor is that the wife's ability to earn may increase with years.

Against the loss or gain in the family's real income must be placed the gain or loss in health or satisfaction to the woman herself. The benefits from increased real income may be entirely lost if the woman's health is sacrificed, or even if work encroaches too much upon her leisure time or that of other members of the family. On the other hand, a lower real income may be acceptable to the family if the woman enjoys gainful work more than household tasks, or gets increased satisfaction because of her changed economic status.

The social life and relationships of the family group are of vital importance, and these are likely to be affected by the wife's gainful work. Any change may have both desirable and undesirable effects. These should be carefully weighed. Owing to long hours of gainful work or evenings crowded with household tasks, earning may reduce the amount of leisure time the family can spend together. The spirit of co-operation and family unity may, however, be developed by the increased co-operation of all members in doing household tasks and the consciousness, in some cases, that each member is doing his or her share in providing for the family.

A common source of difficulty is a difference of opinion between husband and wife as to the desirability of the wife's working. Friction is to be expected in any change that is contrary to established customs and traditions which, it must be remembered, embody society's judgment of what is right and proper.

At times the woman or the family as a whole may be very optimistic about the possibility of her combining gainful work and household tasks. This optimism may be due to a failure to appreciate just what contribution is being made through unpaid work, and how difficult it is to secure satisfactory substitutes. Or it may be due to a failure to anticipate emergencies, such as sickness, which greatly increase the need for the woman's being in the home. Or the family may not realize how the leisure and health of members will be affected. No family should be too hasty in making major or costly changes in manner of living or equipment purchased before these matters are carefully investigated.

SHOULD THE CHILDREN EARN?

The steady increase in the gainful employment of married women has been accompanied by a steady decline in the proportion of children working. There still are many families, however, where the advantages and disadvantages of younger members earning should be carefully weighed. The census bureau reports as gainfully employed in 1930, 6.4 per cent of the boys and 2.9 per cent of the girls 10 to 15 years of age. In the group 16 to 17 years, 41.2 per cent of the boys and 22.1 per cent of the girls were gainfully employed. In some states the proportion is much higher. For example, in South Carolina in 1930, 65.4 per cent of the boys and 36.1 per cent of the girls 16 to 17 years were gainfully employed. Census data overlook children under 10 years, and also those 10 and over who are working on the home farm or doing industrial home-work. There are children under 10 who work in beet fields and on cotton plantations.

Some as young as 6 and 7 years work long hours at home where light and sanitary conditions are often poor, perhaps stringing beads or making artificial flowers.

In some families the gainful employment of the child after he reaches 14 years of age may be accepted as necessary and customary, and little thought given to it. When a family is faced with deciding whether a child should earn, on the one side of the balance they should consider the loss due to interrupted school training and reduced leisure, and the possibility of physical development being checked or health impaired by overwork or undesirable working conditions. On the other side of the balance should be placed such advantages as the increase in money income and the additional goods to be procured and, in some cases, the possible training secured from the work undertaken. Long-run effects can be estimated in only a very vague way. Present needs may appear unduly important when contrasted with the future advantages or disadvantages, the possibilities of which are by no means certain.

The more importance families attach to formal education for the children, and the higher become the real wages of other members, the less frequently will children be called upon to earn. On the other hand it must be recognized that household production has declined until it is seldom more than a one-woman job. As a result, except on farms, children can contribute to their own and family support only through gainful work outside the family group. In the majority of families it is a generally accepted fact that once school is over, if not before, girls as well as boys seek gainful employment and contribute to the expense of their support.

"MAKING" VERSUS BUYING

In spending the family income one of the first questions to be considered is whether to make a good or buy it; whether to use family labor to perform a service or pay for it out of the money income. This problem we shall call "making versus buying."

When faced with this problem, the family at once discovers that time and money have different uses. Money income is useful only for procuring goods. It is, however, generalized purchasing power and may be used in providing any kind of economic goods. It is also a store of value, hence consumption may be postponed. Time is, however, perishable and cannot be stored; it is a constant flow which to be of value must be utilized at once. Time, however, may be used in earning money income, in direct production, and also in leisure time activities; but it can be used in the household for only certain kinds of production.

For some goods there is no alternative to buying, and some goods are produced which the family cannot afford to purchase. In other cases the family is in doubt as to which course to take. It may have to be determined, for example, whether the dress desired is to be purchased ready-to-wear or materials bought and the garment constructed by mother; whether uncooked or ready-to-serve cereal be purchased; whether advantage will be taken of delivery services, or purchases made at cash and carry stores.

Decisions will be influenced greatly by the relative importance of money and time. If one decides to buy rather than make, money income available for other things is thereby reduced. If the manager decides to make something previously purchased, leisure time is decreased, or some gainful work or some other household task may have to be eliminated. It often seems possible by working longer hours or speeding up the work for family labor to include additional tasks. Money income will not permit additional goods unless it is increased in amount or the amount going to some other use is reduced. The smaller the income, the greater will be the tendency to guard it carefully for things which can be procured in no other way.

The relative money and time costs of making and buying must be considered in using money and labor to the greatest advantage. An intelligent choice cannot be made until costs are known.

In planning what to make, the housewife should realize that more money can be saved by doing certain tasks than by doing others. If money-saving is important she should know what uses of time will result in the greatest saving of money. If she should economize on both time and money she should also know where money-saving is the least. Some studies have been made of the relative cost of homemade and ready-to-wear clothing. Among 1,425 farm families studied, silk dresses made at home averaged in money costs a little more than one-half the average price paid for those ready-to-wear. For standardized garments such as cotton night-gowns, pajamas, and underbloomers, the cost of materials used was 75 to 90 per cent of the cost of similar ready-to-wear garments.[1] In a study made by Glanton on saving from home sewing it was found that the greatest saving was made on expensive garments. Outer garments were more profitable than undergarments if the sewer had ability in reproducing style.[2]

Housewives sometimes find that home canning results in little or no saving of money unless products come from their own gardens.

A fixed value cannot be assigned to the housewife's time and a rule laid down that no task is worth while unless this amount is saved. Roberts, after studying laundry as carried on by a group of farm families, concludes: "When the costs of equipment, interest, depreciation and materials are considered, and when the housewife's time is figured at reasonable labor rates, the costs of doing the laundry at home are only a little less than the costs of sending the washing to the power laundry. Sending to the laundry," the writer continues, "may well be considered when the standards of the local laundry are high and the income level of the farmer permits."[3] In this study, household labor was valued at 35 cents an hour. Consequently this advice is only economically sound if the labor, released when the laundry is sent out, can be used in another task which would net at least 35 cents an hour. In many cases no such outlet for time released from laundry work could be found. A woman should estimate the time and money costs of different methods, and calculate the money saved and the extra labor involved. From these facts she can determine the value of her labor in performing the task, and decide whether the performance is worth while.

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[1] Faith Williams, "Clothing Costs Among 1,425 Farm Families," *Yearbook of Agriculture* (1931), pp. 146-9.

[2] "Does It Pay to Sew at Home." *J. H. Ec.* 15 (1923), pp. 277-9.

[3] Wash. Agri. Exp. Sta. Bul. 248, p. 4.

Few household tasks have been systematically studied to determine the money saved. For the most part it is up to the housewife to make her own studies of borderline cases. And how shall she proceed? Starting with some task in which she is especially interested she should keep track of all time and money costs including carfare and time spent in marketing and planning. The cost of using equipment should be added. Total cost will be partly in dollars and cents, and partly in hours and minutes. Then she should calculate how much time and money she would have spent had she purchased the product. The amount of money saved and extra time spent in carrying on the production herself can then be calculated, and the worth of her time per hour in this particular task determined. With this knowledge she can more intelligently decide whether the task is worth while.

Differences in quality of homemade and commercial products often make difficult a direct comparison of costs. If the homemade is better than the commercial product which the family can afford, time costs are often overlooked. If a ready-to-wear article is available at or near the cost the family feels it can afford, considerable money-saving must occur before the woman will consider making it.

The ability of the housewife influences decisions whether to make or buy, for it affects the quality of the product and the time required to make it. In deciding whether to make or buy, the possibility of increased efficiency which would eventually reduce time costs or improve the quality of the good should be considered. If the present performance is part of a learning process the manager must look to the long-run as well as present costs.

Since household production is small scale, it is not possible to concentrate on those tasks which net the largest returns. Nevertheless, by means of a cost comparison it is possible to confine production to those tasks bringing the greatest saving, and to avoid those where little or no pecuniary saving takes place. Money and time costs are not the only things to be considered. When these are known, however, subjective costs and values—for example, dislike of certain tasks, the pleasure derived by the worker, or the educational value of tasks for children—can be more accurately appraised.

Circumstances alter the pecuniary costs to be considered. If equipment and house space are already available in any case, and cannot be sold, it is economically sound to overlook interest on original investment and depreciation due to obsolescence. These are overhead costs and are, in no way, affected by use. Depreciation due to use and operating costs are direct costs. But if the equipment can be sold, interest on the present market value should be included in direct cost. On the other hand, if the family does not possess a machine, both interest on total investment and depreciation due to obsolescence should be considered in determining whether the purchase of this machine would be advisable.

The choice between making and buying not only relates to various ways of procuring new goods and performing certain services, but also raises the question of how valuable is the time spent in repairing clothing, furnishings, etc., to avoid replacement. At what point is it no longer worth while to mend the household linen? Or when does the time spent in darning stockings represent waste, and the purchase of a new pair become more advantageous? Decisions in such matters are tied up with family standards and the relative scarcity of time and money. Good judgment in these matters depends, however, on a knowledge of time and money costs.

HOW SHALL FAMILY INCOME BE SPENT?

Except in a very few families desires tend to outrun income. Whenever this is true, not all goods desired can be purchased. The family must decide on its more important needs. If some goods are purchased others must be omitted. Strange as it may seem, many families do not seem to face squarely the fact that the same dollar cannot be used twice.

All goods desired are not equally important. The family looks upon some as necessaries; these perhaps include goods to maintain physical well-being, productive efficiency, and to meet minimum social requirements. Other goods may be classed as comforts and luxuries. In spending money income first things should come first. The money income is received at intervals but must be used to supply a flow of goods over a period of time. Unwise choice may result in exhausted funds, in relatively unimportant needs being met while the family is deprived of certain necessaries. A shortage in essentials cannot be compensated for by comforts or luxuries. Satisfactory apportionment of funds occurs only if, in the family's careful judgment, no want left unsatisfied appears more important than some other want which has been attended to in its place.

Each family has a minimum level of living. If the income is insufficient for this, it is looked upon as inadequate. A feeling of inadequacy often comes when family income for some reason has been reduced. When this occurs the family may find that some goods previously looked upon as necessaries are really not essential and that with careful management certain wastes may be eliminated. If, after re-evaluation of goods and reduction of wastes, income continues to be inadequate for the minimum standard, an effort is usually made to increase income rather than reduce needs. Perhaps the wife or children become gainful workers.

The influence of the family standard is described by Devine. He considers that the standard of living consists of "all those things which one insists upon having. It is not merely a collective name for the commodities enjoyed at a given time, but for those which are so related to one another, and so important to the consumer, that if any one of them is lacking forces to restore it are immediately put into action."[4]

If there is only enough money income to provide this minimum standard, the family are likely to feel that they have no freedom of choice. Choice will be very difficult if only a slight surplus exists. In this case many different ways of using the surplus suggest themselves to the family. The greater the margin over essentials the greater is the freedom to choose, and the less difficult is the problem of choosing. In only a very few families is income large enough to permit complete freedom of choice, that is, the securing of all goods desired. We cannot say, however, that the higher the income the greater the freedom of choice. A feeling of surplus, a sense of being free to choose, depends partly on the size of income and size of family and also on the family's standard of living, the judgment used in choosing goods, the efficiency in marketing, and the volume of household tasks performed by family members.

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[4] *The Normal Life*, p. 1.

Many difficulties arise in deciding on uses of money income. Within the family conflicting claims arise. They are to be expected, and the family should develop ways of dealing with them. One member competes with another; if money is spent on goods for the special use of one member, the family as a whole may be deprived of certain things. It may be necessary to decide whether mother should wear her winter coat another year in order that Mary may have another dress; or whether a car for family use is more important than a year in business college for John.

The present and the future needs must be weighed. Goods for present use compete with a reserve fund for emergencies, with investment to increase future income, and with insurance to protect the family against possible loss of earnings due to death, sickness, or old age.

Comparisons must be made between goods for widely different uses, and between goods for the "same" use. A radio may compete with a davenport, a new dress with a season ticket for the opera. Renting versus house ownership may have to be considered; the possession of an automobile contrasted with the use of taxi-cabs, or better quality in a hat with better quality in shoes. Such decisions call for careful deliberation.

The major part of the adjustment in choice-making usually takes the form of changes in the quantity and the quality of the good, or in the substitution of other goods serving the same purpose. A cheaper quality may be purchased, for example, "choice" rather than "fancy" tomatoes. The quantity purchased may be reduced. This reduction may be made possible by elimination of waste or a change in the uses to which a good is put. It may be decided that milk for drinking purposes will be purchased only for the children; that other members can get necessary food value from cheaper sources. Other substitutions may occur; skimmed milk powder may be used in place of fresh milk for cooking; beans may be used more frequently and the meat bill reduced; cotton may replace silk for school dresses. Adjustments may take the form of using durable goods for a longer period. The hall rug need not be replaced this year; father's coat may be worn four years in place of three as previously planned. Greater use may be made of "free" goods, e.g., public schools in place of private, public libraries in place of books rented or owned.

A study of possible alternatives may lead to an increase in one expenditure in order to reduce the expenditure for another. It may be decided that the coal bill can be reduced by weather stripping put on the windows, that an insulated water heater would reduce the gas or electric bill.

The choice between alternatives can be based only to a limited extent on scientific knowledge. Food composition is known. With a knowledge of costs it is possible to determine, for example, the cheapest sources of calories, of protein, iron, calcium, etc. Science can point the way to the foods supplying the nutrients necessary for health at the lowest per unit cost; but health is only one factor taken into consideration in choosing food. Esthetic and prestige values must also be considered. Science cannot point the way to maximum utility in these, or advise whether John's rather than Mary's allowance is to be reduced.

WHO SHALL DECIDE HOW MONEY INCOME IS TO BE USED?

The kinds of questions which arise when choosing between different uses of money income have been examined. We have said nothing, however, about who does or should make these decisions, or what procedure or method is or should be followed in order to get the best results.

Family income in most cases consists of payment received by individual members. There are comparatively few family enterprises where income is derived from the joint labor of family members.

In 1930, 62.1 per cent of all families in the United States had only one gainful worker; 21.1 per cent had two. Even though they do not share in the earning, all members share in the use of money income. Should the separate incomes be pooled and looked upon as family income? Or do those who receive the income have a prior claim on at least a portion of what they earn? Should the same rules be applied to the earnings of an adult son or daughter living in the home as to the earnings of husband and wife?

Some system of control must be worked out. Family practices in this matter vary greatly. Perhaps the ideal situation, especially where income is earned by husband or wife or both, is to have money income from various sources pooled and divided among the various uses on the basis of need. Control then would lie with that person who has final authority concerning most important needs. Some people believe that the husband and father is the head of the family and should have the final say. Others hold that the wife should have equal authority with the husband and that children should share in proportion to maturity and special knowledge. In most families the husband is the final authority on some things. For other things the judgment of the wife and other members is accepted by the family.

This division of authority is to some extent a recognition of individual right, but it is also based on division of labor. Wise choice calls for special knowledge. In the field of food, clothing, house furnishing, for example, the wife's judgment may be accepted. In the case of the car, heating equipment for the house, savings and investment the husband may be allowed to judge.

Farm family expenditures, some people believe, provide evidence that control rests in the hands of the husband. Kyrk writes: "With the control of the spendable income in the hands of men it is no wonder that large barns and small houses, large farms and scanty furniture, machinery for farm operations and hand-tools for household operations so frequently are found together."[5]

The tendency at present is toward more and more democratic control with increasing control in the hands of women. In any given family the final authority in case of conflict depends a great deal on personal differences, as aggressiveness, jealousy concerning customary powers, attitude toward family customs and traditions, the time and thought that any one member has given to particular choices.

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[5] *Economic Problems of the Family*, p. 180.

More control is tending to pass to the woman because she does the buying, and control of money income is closely tied up with this. Moreover the wife in most families has greater knowledge of goods available and, in most cases, has probably given much more thought to family needs.

Each family must establish a working arrangement in regard to control and expenditure of money income. Is the husband to turn over to his wife his entire wage or salary and receive back an allowance for personal expenses? Or is he to "dole" out money to her on request, she remaining ignorant of the actual total income? Or are a common purse and joint bank account to be used? Or are the husband and wife to decide together the expenditures for which they are to be responsible and allocate allowances to each other? Are the children to share in deciding on family expenditures and also have an allowance for certain personal needs? These are all practical questions which have to be answered somehow in conducting family business.

BUDGETING

To budget or not to budget, that is the question. Relatively few families acknowledge that they budget.[6] Most of these have, however, a more or less definite plan although it may never have been put on paper, at least not in an organized form. Mental plans are made and at times worked out at odd moments on the back of an envelope or some other scrap of paper.

Families know how much the grocery, milk, gas, and meat bills are likely to be, and from time to time they study how the cost of these may be cut. If a new car is desired or a sleeping porch is to be built they estimate how these are to find a place in the money income along with all the other things which are wanted. Few people, however, plan detailed expenditures a year or six months in advance and make a record of their plan.

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[6] U. S. Dept. Com., *The Retailer and the Consumer in New England,* Trade Information Bul. 575 (1928). Replies indicating use or non-use of family budgets show 37 per cent keeping a budget. Nearly 4,000 families reported.

Income apportionment inevitably takes place as we make our choices and spend our money. This apportionment may be formal or informal. When apportioned informally, choices are often made in a somewhat casual, haphazard fashion. The expenditure pattern is built up from minor decisions made without attempting to see each good in relation to total expenditure. Experience soon teaches one the approximate amount to be reserved for "necessaries," so that choice of other goods does not encroach on the amount needed for these.

Budgeting differs from this informal planning only to the extent that it is more complete and definite. The purpose of the budget is to secure from the total income the goods most desired. Budgeting is usually carried on when it is felt that informal planning is not adequate. It may be that the plan evolved by informal planning has never been especially satisfactory. Shortage of funds for goods greatly desired may be a common occurrence. Consequently, choices are scrutinized in order to see how the needed funds may be released. Careful study of expenditures may seem necessary in order to obtain new goods which have just appeared in the market. A revision of the whole plan may seem the best way to do this. The budget may also be used as a thrift device to make more saving possible. House ownership may be the incentive, or the purchase of a new fur coat or radio. Income may fall and needs may have to be adjusted. The family may move to a new community where past habits are no longer a satisfactory guide. The needs of the family change. Children come. The increased needs are not accompanied by a corresponding increase in income. Adjustment of past habits of expenditure is necessary.

Shortage of income and need for adjustment of expenditures are not the only reasons for budgeting. The budget may aid in building up a more rational scheme of expenditure in bringing about greater unity and harmony of choices. For some people a budget is a source of satisfaction because it helps them to achieve conscious and deliberate control. Tugwell says:

> Used carefully, the budget can raise the limitations, the goals to be reached, and the instruments available into simultaneous view, and so can enable a highly rational scheme to be built up for the control of consuming activities. . . . Its special advantage lies in its ability to make a scheme conscious and to relate each item in it inescapably to all its other items.[7]

People who are content with what they are securing from their money income should be advised against formal budgeting. It does not simplify the task of spending except for families that are not satisfied with what they are getting from their incomes. To them systematic planning is much less disturbing than a continual sense of confusion and uncertainty. For the family who is content to plan from day to day, whose spending habits are well-established, the budget may seem futile and unnecessary, a way of making spending difficult.

The careful planning of expenditures is a task often neglected. It is only recently that families have come to depend on money incomes. Perhaps we have not yet built up the habits and customs needed for a money economy. Perhaps the benefits to be derived are somewhat too vague to make the need for planning urgent. Or the failure to plan may be due to difficulties encountered in the task.

To have a situation ideal for budgeting, several conditions must exist. In the first place family income is known; all funds are pooled; no member feels that he should dictate choices or that his needs have a prior claim because he contributes the major portion of the funds. All members who can do so have studied family needs; they are aware of the cost of present standards and are willing to take time to look ahead and discuss possible alternatives. Sympathy for the needs and desires of others prevails.

Needless to say such an ideal combination of circumstances seldom exists. Income in many cases is not known. With farm families, income depends on crop conditions and market price, both of which are apt to fluctuate greatly. Doctors and lawyers and other independent workers have no assured income. Industrial workers with a fixed wage rate do not know the probable unemployment they face. On the basis of past experience income may be estimated. Where income is not accurately known, families very often find it advisable to plan for only minimum needs, and to list in order other things to be secured if income permits.

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[7] *American Economic Life,* pp. 467-8.

Irregular income increases the difficulty of planning. At the same time it increases the need of it. The family's need for certain goods is continuous. If income is irregular, long-time planning is necessary in order to ensure certain essentials. This is more true for urban than farm families. On farms the provision of most basic necessaries is usually not dependent on money income.

In some cases the woman who does the major planning may not even know what the money income is. She is more likely to have information if income is in the form of salaries and wages than if it is derived from commissions, fees, or profits from independent enterprise.

Even though the funds are pooled, it may be impossible to get the co-operation necessary for formal planning. Some members may not be interested, or they may consider that informal planning is quite adequate. It may be possible to secure co-operation for separate choices where the circumstances of the moment make it evident that a decision must be reached; but mapping out a plan for future expenditures may not have the same urgency. Budgeting, in most families, is not possible without the co-operation of those members who would have a voice in day-to-day choices. The decision reached when all share might have been the same as that made by the housewife alone. Yet the very sharing, the discussion of possible choices, tends to eliminate the feeling of discontent which may occur at what seems at times to be a failure to get a "fair" share of the income. This discontent usually disrupts the expenditure scheme, and the manager is forced to resort to informal planning.

The problem in budgeting is to match uses of income with the income itself. It is necessary, first of all, to decide on the period for which the plan is to be made. It may be made for the week, month, or year; and some expenditures for even longer. Then the money income for the period must be known. This income may be spent, saved, or given away.

The budget may take various forms. It may indicate only the major items. These may be stated in percentages of the income, for example, 10 per cent for investment and insurance, 15 per cent for clothing, 20 per cent for food. Or they may be stated in dollars, for example, \$500 for food, \$400 for rent, \$250 for car. Or the expenditures may be planned in much more detail. The budget may indicate the specific goods desired, the quantities of each and the probable price to be paid, and perhaps even specifications as to qualities.

The success of detailed budgeting depends on ability to anticipate all wants. The making of such a list may appear to be a very difficult task. Past expenditures, however, form a basis. From memory and such records as bills, receipts, check stubs, and whatever household accounts are available, a list may be compiled. This can easily be done for some items, such as house rent, insurance, gas and electricity, and the major items of clothing. For other things, purchased in small amounts at frequent intervals, the quantity needed for the year may not be known. For example, how many pairs of stockings does Jane need during the year? Or what quantity of meat, sugar, milk, is needed to maintain the standard desired? Knowledge of price may be very limited especially for things infrequently purchased. Before complete detailed budget lists can be drawn up, it may be necessary to keep a record of at least some of the expenditures in order to discover the quantities usually purchased and the cost of the quality used.[8]

To the list of goods customarily selected should be added the additional goods, the increased quantities, and the improved qualities which are desired. The purchase of durable goods, especially those involving large expenditure, should be distributed throughout months or years; or a fund set aside for initial purchase or replacement. For many families this is done for certain garments, pieces of furniture, and the automobile.

When savings and all the goods desired are listed the sum may far exceed the income. Then the real problem lies in bringing expenditures within the expected income. In planning a budget some people like to classify goods as "must have," ' would like to have," or as "quantity and cost fixed," "quantity and cost not fixed." Such classifications help in deciding where to cut in case not all goods desired can be secured, or where to expand if extra funds are available. There are, however, few items which could not be altered if real need arose.

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[8] C. G. Woodhouse and F. Williams, *Comparison of Schedule and Account Methods of Collecting Data on Family Living,* Dept. of Agri. Technical Bul. 386, 1933. This study would indicate that a fairly satisfactory estimate can be made of family expenditures for the past year without the use of accounts.

Matching goods desired against income is no easy matter. In one way or another, however, it must be done, whether a careful budget is drawn up or expenditures are allowed to drift with daily impulses and habits. The only advantage in the budget is that it aids in bringing about a more rational distribution of income among the members of the family, among the various types of goods wanted, and between present and future expenditure. The member of the family who assumes responsibility for budgeting has many difficulties with which to contend. But perhaps in no other task does thought-taking before acting bring greater returns.

After a feasible plan for the year's expenditure is drawn up, those making it probably wonder if the plan really calls for the best possible division of income. They look for a test of its correctness, for an expert who will tell them whether the amount set aside for food, rent, education, savings, for example, is either too much or too little. Kyrk writes:

> There are two guides and two only. There is, in the first place, the budget that represents the minimum tolerable level of living as construed by the best informed and most thoughtful of the place and time. There is, in the second place, the budget that represents the practice of families of similar composition and income living under similar conditions.[9]

If any items in the family budget fall below the amount allowed in the minimum budget the family ought seriously to consider whether the amount they allowed is adequate.

Kyrk believes:

> Even if this income is $4,500 or $6,500 comparison of the budgetary plan with the minimum has its value. The comparison gives the family the sense that it has the power of choice,

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[9] *Economic Problems of the Family,* p. 406.

> a sense that is highly desirable; it sets up a distinction between the "necessary" as a universal concept, an unvarying, objective measure of human needs, and the "necessary" as a subjective, personal, or class concept, varying from group to group.[10]

The family budget may also in some cases be contrasted with the average practice of families of similar size and composition. The expenditures of only limited groups of families have been studied. A comparison of the family budget with these may be of interest not so much as a rule of conduct, unless one wishes to conform with community standards, but rather as suggestive in order that one may more critically appraise his own expenditures. Average expenditures are only a picture of group family behavior; they do not even represent the expenditure of any given family. They cannot be looked upon as a picture of correct expenditure. If family expenditure differs widely from the standard budget, it may still be the best for the family. And alas, if income division coincides with the "standard" budget, one cannot rest assured that it is the best possible division. The standard is suggestive to those without experience in planning expenditures and may help any family to criticize its own division.

Once a plan has been made there is the question of how closely it should be followed. With rent and insurance, for example, where the exact amount is definitely known, the plan may be followed exactly. Of other purchases this may not be true. The budget plan may for some reason be found unsatisfactory. In such cases should the family consider that its plans were all for naught? Some things may have cost more or less than was anticipated; emergencies or unexpected opportunities may have arisen. The family should take comfort in the fact that no matter what happens the more thinking that has been done about expenditures the better able is the family to make a satisfactory adjustment to meet the changed situation. The budget at all times should be looked upon as a tool to be used to help the family to spend its money income to the greatest advantage. The budget is made to serve the family, it should not be imposed as an iron rule to be followed. However, if serious thought has been given to the plan it should not be cast aside on an impulse.

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[10] *Ibid.*, p. 408.

If exact expenditure plans cannot be made, either because of irregular income or emergency, it may be best, in looking ahead, to stake out only the main lines and make minor decisions at a later time.

HOUSEHOLD ACCOUNTING

A budget is a plan for future spending, and accounts are a record of past spending. Accounts are useful only as they aid in directing expenditures. They may be used from time to time to check current expenditures for the purpose of ascertaining whether the budget plan is being followed and what changes in plans should be made. They also serve as a basis for a new plan. Some families in budgeting rely on memory and scattered incidental records, such as check stubs and receipts. Others feel the need for more detail.

Accounts are not needed in a household as in a business to reveal net earnings and state of solvency. They do aid, however, in tracing down possible extravagances and unwise choices and in helping the family to get as much as possible for their income. With their function clearly seen, accounts become more than epitaphs to dead money; no family can say, "What's the use? The money is spent—recording will not bring it back."

Household accounting, on the whole, is comparatively rare. Only 8 per cent in a group of 500 Oklahoma farm women reporting kept a record of clothing expenditures, and some of these kept only partial records.[11] In some families, no record is made of expenditures because there is nothing to be gained from it. They have already established "satisfactory" expenditure habits; they make no budget hence have no need for accounts. On the whole, however, the failure to keep accounts is probably more frequently due to ignorance concerning their advantages, to a belief that account-keeping is very difficult and time-consuming, or to a dislike for the task.

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[11] G. Fernandes, *The Relation between the Economic Status of the Oklahoma Farm Family and the Farm Woman's Standard of Management with Respect to Clothing,* Agri. Exp. Sta. Bul. 197 (1930).

The housewife may consider household accounting more difficult than it really is merely because she has had no training in this line. Skill in accounting is much less frequently developed both in home and school than skill in cooking, for example. The expected difficulty may be the result of experience with rather involved household account forms, or the idea that every cent must be accounted for or the accounts will be valueless. As a matter of fact, however, very little training is required, a simple system may be very effective, and 90 to 95 per cent accuracy or even less is enough to aid greatly in budgeting.

Dislike for the task may be due to difficulties involved, the time required, a generalized dislike for figures and for being "business-like," or to the fact that accounting, to some women, may not be nearly so interesting as many other household tasks.

Obstacles to account-keeping can, however, be surmounted. A simple system can be selected; a file for bills and memoranda kept handy so that entries once a week are adequate; and a business corner reserved where the woman can work at recording expenditures.

In planning accounts, several important decisions must be made as to details to be recorded; whether or not a continuous record of all items is to be kept; and what degree of accuracy is to be sought. For example, should classified records of fruits and vegetables, meats, dairy products, etc., be kept? Should the clothing expenses of each member be listed separately? In what detail should operating costs, expenditures for recreation, education, and health be studied? Will a careful study of the details of food for a week or a month be sufficient? Should each month's rent be listed separately or merely a yearly statement made? What kind of a summary form will aid most in budgeting? One general rule can be made. No detail should be recorded which does not serve a purpose. Effort should be made to reduce the time and labor involved and still have accounts which aid in planning. The simpler the accounts, the more likely are they to be kept.

After records are kept for a while, possible economies studied, and a satisfactory income apportionment worked out, some families find it unnecessary to continue with accounts except for a few expenditures, for example, the car, clothing, and recreation. In these, expenditures in excess of original plans can readily occur. Only as new situations arise may complete accounts seem necessary.

As was true in budgeting, family co-operation is necessary and sometimes very difficult to secure especially if one desires to record all expenditures. The difficulty encountered in securing detailed records of personal expenditures for incidentals is often so great that it is better to let the details go and record only the total. The woman may carefully list her expenditures and find it difficult to secure, for example, a record of car expenses paid by her husband. Such a woman should comfort herself by remembering that some records are better than none, that if some costs are accurately known, others can be more accurately estimated.

The value of accounts is often lost because the family does not summarize and study expenditures. If a budget is made for a year and accounts kept, at the end of the year the budget should be compared with what has actually happened and future plans made in accordance with what the family now thinks is best. But even if no accounts are kept, a budget on the basis of what scattered records are available is better than none.

THE LIMITATIONS OF BUDGETING AND ACCOUNTING

Alas! A system of budgeting and accounting that is 100 per cent efficient does not solve the problem of the correct use of family income. The family should not rest content when they have made a budget, no matter how detailed, have managed to keep within it, and have made an accurate record of expenditures. Planning expenditures is something more than this.

> The acquisition of the knowledge, the judgment, the tastes, the values and the capacities that make for wise consumption is not a simple process of learning the technique of budgeting. It is a life-long, continuous process of learning how human personality seeks to express itself and what experiences, activities and ends human beings seek.[12]

[12] H. Kyrk, *Economic Problems of the Family,* p. 406.

Income apportionment presents a more or less constant problem. Choices once made and found satisfactory tend to be repeated, but circumstances are continually changing. Group needs and desires change, and so do incomes and price tags. Each family lives in a dynamic world, one ever-changing, each day bringing solutions to old problems or increasing their complexity and introducing new ones. As life changes we go on to new desires. New opportunities arise. The possibilities of a fuller life are to a large extent tied up with the use of money income. Here is a field where time and thought bring rich reward, where the spirit of adventure and caution should be creatively combined.

CHAPTER XV

THE USE OF FAMILY LABOR

The real income of the family, that is, the goods and services made available for its use, depends not only on wise use of money income but also on wise use of family labor. The family as a whole or the woman in the rôle of manager must decide what tasks are to be performed, who is to do them, when they shall be done, and what method is to be used. The whole problem of organization and management in the household is different from a business because production is unspecialized and intermingled with consumption in both time and place. Moreover the producing and consuming groups are one, and the authority of the woman, on whom falls the major responsibility for planning and directing tasks, is closely bound up with the personal life and relationships of the family.

The concentration of much of the management in the hands of one worker represents economy. Group management is often time-consuming, especially when many detailed decisions must be made. But the household manager has not the authority to decide independently of the other members the policy to be followed and methods used. She may be entirely responsible for some things and in the case of others she may have to confer with the group. In so intimate a group as the family, the organization for management is simple. Occasionally a family will establish a more or less formal council for discussing its economic and social problems. As members share more in life outside the home, the need for family council increases. Their work and recreation do not naturally bring them together as much as formerly. Conferring with the group is especially necessary in deciding on standards and on who shall do certain tasks. In both of these the interests of individual members are directly involved. The children's participation in family council should depend on their age and ability to contribute to and benefit from group planning.

The governing personnel is likely, however, to depend largely on general family relationships. The household may have an autocratic head who makes all important decisions; in other cases the democratic spirit may prevail. A major problem of the household manager is to secure the co-operation necessary for the satisfactory direction of the household enterprise.

WHAT TASKS SHALL BE PERFORMED?

Goods purchased are limited by the amount of money available, and goods produced or tasks performed are limited by the capabilities of the members and the time and energy they are willing to give. The labor to be used is not so fixed in quantity as is the money income. Time may be taken from consumption. The limits of this reserve of productive power are set by the needs and desires of the members for rest and recreation and participation in the social life of family and community.

In households where there are time and energy to spare, the housewife tends to add more tasks if the performance seems worth while and the necessary materials do not cost too much. Where family members are overburdened or where they desire more leisure, tasks should be carefully evaluated and the least important eliminated. Time-saving methods should be sought and perhaps the burden of tasks more equally distributed. The possibility of purchasing rather than making should be more carefully investigated. Some customary purchases may be discontinued to make money available for other things.

The labor demands of the family standard should be carefully appraised. The need for this is especially great because the woman lives with her job. Decisions must be made as to what should be left undone. Otherwise the old adage may still be true: "Man works from sun to sun, but woman's work is never done."

Overwork probably occurs most frequently in low-income groups. Here it may be felt that money income must not be wasted on anything the family can do for itself. Overwork may also occur in medium-income groups when the children are young and the volume of tasks for which only expensive substitutes are available is high. It so happens that many families which at some time enjoy a fairly high income have a relatively low income when the children are small, and a higher one later when professional and business advancement brings increases. In these families at the time the housekeeping load is heaviest it cannot readily be reduced by purchasing.

Eliminating non-essentials is probably the way in which most families reduce the burden of overwork. Over-refined ways of living often create an unnecessary burden. The housewife may demonstrate this truth in various ways perhaps by simplifying furnishings so that less care is needed, by dusting only every other day, by using paper napkins in place of linen. When she is hard pressed only certain minimum standards need be maintained.

Most household managers probably apportion their time among the various tasks in a rather informal way. As with income apportionment, choice in regard to uses of time would be more rational and critical, and less impulsive and habitual, if alternative uses were carefully studied and a time plan made. More imagination is needed in discovering ways by which family labor may be used to contribute more fully to welfare and satisfaction.

DIVIDING THE TASKS

Division of responsibility may be based on custom, authority, or group planning. Of prime importance in assigning tasks is the question of who can do the task. If it calls for special ability or performance at a certain time, choice of worker is limited. Custom may lead to one member doing more than his share. Here is a husband just home from work, weary from the day's labors. With the evening paper in his hand, he is beginning to relax when reminded that the garbage should be taken out. This trivial duty assigned to him must be performed even though he needs relaxation and another member of the family has "too much" leisure.

From the standpoint of efficiency in the performance of a single task the most capable worker should perform it. The same person may happen, however, to be the most efficient in several types of work. His labor should be reserved for most important uses and his right to leisure considered. The educational value of a task to children may be of greater importance than efficiency. Efficiency may also be sacrificed to the development of family unity and co-operation.

The worker's attitude to the job should have some weight. He may take a special pride in or derive considerable pleasure from a task. Or he may dislike a task because of the physical labor involved, the monotony or absence of companionship. The dislike may be due to custom. Brother may feel imposed upon if asked to do what he considers is a girl's job. Yet tasks like carrying wood and water which were formerly looked upon as his work, in many cases, no longer have to be done. There may be some tasks which everyone dislikes, perhaps dishwashing. Yet this must be performed. Is the member who protests and grumbles the loudest the one to be relieved? Or is there to be another basis of judgment, e.g., rank within the group?

In every household some members are willing to contribute whatever they can. The labor of others is available only for a use agreeable to them. They have to be motivated and satisfactory working conditions provided. Tasks may be performed in response to authority; and sometimes authoritative control is advisable. Satisfactory personnel management calls, however, for more than this. It includes a study of the individual members, their skills, aptitudes, and attitudes in relation to various tasks. With children especially, there is a large fund of latent energy which can be released only by the right incentive. Natural interests such as experimentation, curiosity, sociability, sympathy, leadership, may transform drudgery into joyful effort. Fear of displeasure is not nearly so effective as interest. The personnel manager should develop a sense of fair deal in the family, and division of responsibility should be made on this basis.

PLANNING THE USE OF TIME

The length of her own working day is one of the first questions for the manager to consider in planning the use of time.

The optimum length will depend on many things: for example, the volume of tasks, the health and temperament of the worker, and her desire for free time. Even when maximum productivity is desired, a determination of optimum length of working day is not simple. Where family need is very great a woman may work long hours, resting only when very tired. In this way she may be defeating her own ends. A shorter working day might, in the long run, bring greater output. This is true at least in industry. Industrial experience has shown that a shorter average working day may result in an actual increase in the average day's production.[1]

A long working day is likely to defeat the woman's ends in another way. It may reduce her leisure and the possibility of her sharing in the social life of the family. This sharing may be even more important to the family than the production omitted because of it.

The house is primarily a place of consumption. Hence consumers' interests should be to the forefront in planning the distribution of tasks. The production should interfere as little as possible and contribute as much as possible to the social life and leisure time of the group. To some families this involves the problem of getting the tasks out of the way, so that when the family assembles production will not occupy the foreground; in other cases, tasks are planned so that they may be shared by the family.

Adherence to plans previously made sometimes conflicts with individual interests. Meals served promptly and no later service given may seem something of a restraint on adolescent boys and girls, for example. Adherence to schedule is, however, beneficial to the workers. A balance between interests must be secured. Over-exactness and anxiety about organization may result in an absence of freedom, a working tension, and other conditions which defeat the ends of the group as consumers. The homemaker must establish routines. They are important in maintaining harmonious group life. But routines should not rule. Flexibility is needed if the needs of the family and the woman herself are to be met. Human needs, not blind following of routine and system, should decide policies.

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[1] A. H. Ryan, "Fatigue Studies in Household Tasks," *J. H. Ec.,* XX (1928, Sept.), 642.

The interest of the consumer is served if the goods are available at the time and place desired, and if the production does not interfere unduly with other activities. The worker's interest is served if the tasks are arranged so as to reduce the time required and the fatigue involved, and to interfere as little as possible with other things that she would like to do. A complete plan includes the distribution of tasks throughout the week, the sequence of daily, weekly, and special tasks, and the distribution of work and rest periods.

The distribution of tasks is determined by a number of factors. Some tasks can best be performed when one or more workers co-operate. It may be that the labor entailed is too great for one worker, or the task may be very time-consuming or monotonous if one works alone. Such tasks must be arranged when all workers whose labor is required are free.

The time for certain tasks is relatively fixed, for example, the serving of meals and preparing the children for bed. Customs which the group may have no desire to modify, or conditions outside the home, e.g., hours of gainful employment, may determine the time of others. The time for feeding the baby cannot be changed. Other tasks are arranged accordingly. Many tasks are, however, postponable and may be performed at the option of the manager. The time for some tasks must be flexible: even if the baby sleeps and eats by schedule, taking him out in the sunshine depends on the weather.

Distribution of tasks affects fatigue of the worker. Equal distribution from day to day is desired by some workers. This may be difficult to secure. Tasks may pile up on Saturday in the preparation for more leisure time on Sunday; seasonal tasks, such as canning or the serving of extra meals in the busy season on the farm, greatly increase the burden at certain periods.

Equal distribution of tasks from day to day is not always desired. Here is a woman who by working overtime two or three days in the week does all the weekly and special tasks and on the other days is free except for daily routine. This often occurs in homes where the burden of work is relatively light.

The best distribution of tasks throughout the day depends on circumstances. Several short periods of work may be desired in order to reduce fatigue, or one long period to allow consecutive free time for other activities. Or a balance between these two may be sought, making work as continuous as possible by dovetailing tasks, yet providing adequate rest periods as well. When time entirely free is desired, continuous tasks such as child care present a problem.

Rest periods as well as work should be planned. The length and distribution of rest periods are important. The woman may wonder whether short work periods, broken by short rest periods, are better than longer work periods followed by longer rest periods. Experiments on muscular fatigue have shown that under certain conditions, "if work is reduced by one-half, the period of necessary rest can actually be reduced half or three-quarters as much again. Thus, if 30 contractions exhaust the finger muscle so that it needs two hours' rest, 15 contractions require not one hour but only a half-hour for recuperation."[2]

Such experiments suggest a principle on which rest periods can be planned. In discussing the difficulty of determining proper rest pauses, recreation, and sleep, Ryan says:

> Where the work is repetitive a study of the hourly output curve would indicate the proper place to interpose rest pauses, since the need for rest is indicated at the point where the output begins to deteriorate. When the work is not repetitive the proper location and duration of the rest pause are not so readily ascertained but could possibly be approximated by experimentation.[3]

No study of the "best" distribution of work and rest periods has been made of the tasks commonly performed by the housewife. Through trial and error, advice from others, or by studying herself on the job, a satisfactory balance of work and rest may be arranged. Good rest conditions are often difficult to provide. Children may need watching. Various interruptions may interfere with the worker's securing a definite break with her work.

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[2] Josephine Goldmark, *Fatigue and Efficiency,* p. 34.

[3] "Fatigue Studies in Household Tasks," *J. H. Ec.,* XX (1928), 643.

The combination of tasks plays an important part in reducing fatigue and also the time spent. By careful combinations each unit of time may be "fully" utilized. Time may be saved by reducing to a minimum the number of trips to the market. In planning effective combinations the manager must consider, for example, the place at which the task is done, the necessary preparation and clearing away, the combinations possible. It may be found that time is saved by commencing the preparations for lunch while washing the breakfast dishes, rather than by attempting to combine lunch preparation with cleaning carried on in another room. To reduce the time needed for assembling tools and supplies and later putting them away, the fullest use should be made of the tools and supplies once they are assembled. Time may be saved by doing all the necessary baking at one time, by washing dishes once a day in place of three times. Work rooms are used for several purposes so where preparation is lengthy, a short period may be valueless if only a limited portion of the work can be done. In clothing construction, for example, unless there is a work room where things can be left spread out, half an hour or even an hour for the undertaking of certain processes may not seem enough to even bother starting.

The sequence, or the way in which tasks follow each other, is also very important. Similar tasks should be grouped together not only because time may be saved in preparation and clearing away if the same tools are used, but because change of task means loss of time and energy. With a variety of tasks such as occurs in the household this loss may be very great. After the muscles are adjusted, a rhythm of work is established and fatigue is minimized somewhat. Münsterberg says: "All rhythm contains a repetition of movement without making a real repetition of the psychophysical impulse necessary. In the rhythmical activity a large part of the first excitement still serves for the second, and the second for the third."[4] It is a well-known fact that "the speed performance of a single task increases as the period of work is prolonged up to a certain point. A certain amount of warming up seems necessary. In this warming up process previous distracting conditions disappear and lost rhythm is recovered."[5] After continued performance fatigue may cause the output to fall. But the danger of too long continuation of any one is not very great since the household worker carries on so many different tasks.

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[4] *Psychology and Industrial Efficiency,* p. 162.

For efficient planning the manager may have to consider many other factors. For example, when schedule the "mussy" tasks, e.g., plucking a chicken, canning tomatoes, ripping garments for making over, so not to make extra labor? In few homes at the present time are special work places provided for these. How distribute the onerous and the pleasant tasks to minimize fatigue? What jobs may be kept on hand so that neighborly calls interfere as little as possible with the time schedule? How much margin ought to be allowed for emergencies? A study of the character of the emergencies which tend to upset plans may pave the way for their reduction.

The distribution of tasks, and their combination and sequence, are largely determined by habit and custom, and necessary changes are often made without a formal plan. Some women without a formal written plan do very systematic planning. Others like a written plan indicating who shall do the tasks and when they shall be performed. This may be particularly true if tasks are to be performed by a paid worker, or if other members of the family share to a considerable extent.

The inexperienced worker derives most benefit from a written plan, and she also encounters more difficulty in making it than does the experienced housewife. For the inexperienced it may be advisable to list the regular tasks to be performed and the time the various workers are available. Tasks may be classified according to frequency of performance, i.e., daily, weekly, once in two weeks, or otherwise. The more exactly the time required for each is known the more exact can be the decisions regarding the time of performance. With a list of tasks and of the time at which workers are available, the problem of distribution commences. A long period of study and analysis of various combinations may be necessary before the best plan is evolved. Details found valuable in an initial plan may not be necessary later.

[5] A. H. Ryan, "Fatigue Studies in Household Tasks," *op. cit.*, p. 641.

This is often the case especially where the woman herself does most of the work.

After the plan is made the manager is faced with the problem of carrying it out. The adjustments necessary will depend on the manager's knowledge of her job, the carefulness exercised in making the plan, and the emergencies which arise. The efficient manager attempts to use her plan as a tool, making her better prepared to meet changed or unforeseen conditions.

THE BEST METHOD

In deciding on method two things are important: (1) how to secure a product of the desired quality, and (2) how to perform the task with a minimum of time, energy, and money. Increased efficiency may lead to a reduction in the time, energy, and money costs required to secure a given result, or the securing of a better or greater product with the same cost. Concern about quality is felt only if the quality of the good produced falls below the desired standard. Money, time, and energy costs are important only if these resources are limited.

The desire to improve the quality of the product, or to lower the expenditure of time, energy, or money, is not always equally great. In the case of some products, the quality customarily obtained may be considered satisfactory. Then the emphasis may fall on saving time, energy, or money, or perhaps on all three. In other cases the product desired may call for an improvement in quality even though greater "costs" be incurred. Then the manager will be most interested in determining what change of materials or technique will ensure a better product.

The reduction of time, energy, and money costs may not be compatible with each other, or it may lead to a lowering of the quality. The manager must make decisions regarding the relative importance of each. In many instances, one may have to be sacrificed to the other. The saving of time and energy may, for example, call for the purchase of equipment. In market selection the use of the telephone in ordering fruits and vegetables may save time, but may increase the money costs and even lower the quality. Extensive shopping may help the buyer to locate the most desirable quality at the "lowest" price, but will probably greatly increase the time cost. Many a household buyer may wonder whether it pays her to check weights and measures, or items on bills, or keep record of the length of use of an article. Unless slight monetary savings are considered very important, the time required may not make the effort appear worth while.

WHAT METHOD WILL GIVE THE QUALITY DESIRED?

Quality has a prior claim on attention. Until a "satisfactory" quality is assured, ways of reducing "costs," that is money, time, and energy required, are of secondary importance. This is true in all production. Babcock, in discussing production methods in industry, says: "The first measure of suitability is of course quality—the performance of the operation so that it results in a predetermined quality of result, for if the predetermined result is not precisely achieved the method can never be 'best.' " After the quality desired is achieved the suitability of method with respect to strain upon operator and equipment, and shortness of time of performing the operation, is considered.[6] The household manager considers her production problems in much the same order. A survey of women's magazines suggests that quality is of foremost importance. The appeal is predominantly to the craft interest with less emphasis on the time and energy entailed.

The housewife may be concerned about quality because she recognizes that her products fall far below a satisfactory standard. Her cakes may always be coarse in texture, not at all like those baked by her neighbor. Changing standards increase her difficulty. The family may come to desire a better quality or a different good from that before considered satisfactory. So the improvement of quality is a problem which constantly confronts most women.

The importance attached to the quality depends on a number of things. Few workers, taking a pleasure in the performance or having a pride in the product, count time and energy costs. The satisfaction a worker gets from the high quality of her cakes, the luster of her damask linen, the daintiness of her children's clothes, the attractiveness of her house furnishings, and other products of her hand, may lead to a greater interest in the improvement of quality than in the saving of time and energy.

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[6] The Taylor Society, *Scientific Management in American Industry* (1929), p. 78.

The pleasure her family derives from the things she makes or does also stimulates her pride in her work and her desire for better quality. Community standards and her reputation for certain products may serve to strengthen the importance of quality and diminish the emphasis placed on the saving of time and energy.

Method, as it relates to quality, is apt to receive greatest attention where the productive process involves a change in the material form of the good. In such cases evidences of poor workmanship and of successful performance are particularly apparent. The relationship between method, or the technique of the worker, and the quality of the finished product is readily recognized. For this reason food preparation and clothing construction will, to many managers, present definite performance problems whereas child care and training may not.

A knowledge of certain fundamental facts is necessary to the production of goods of high quality; so also is skill in handling materials. A knowledge of how to perform a certain task must in many cases be supplemented by actual practice so that the necessary skill is acquired. The household manager may have the problem of training hired workers or the members of the family. In most cases, however, she is faced with the difficulty of acquiring the necessary skill herself.

REDUCING MONEY COSTS

In deciding on the method to be used, the desire to reduce money costs appears on the whole stronger than the desire to reduce time and energy. A transfer of many goods from "making" to buying has occurred. As a result, time has been released for new tasks or for an elaboration of the old. In addition the expenditure of money is often more apparent than the use of time and energy. Time and energy "costs" are often confined to one member. They may, in some measure at least, be taken from her leisure time. The members who do not share in the tasks may not be aware of the time and energy costs, but only of the resulting product which they may find highly satisfactory. For example, Jean who is in high school is beginning to take increased interest in her clothes. She likes a fresh dress every other day. Mother does the washing and ironing. Jean does not appreciate the labor involved. Hugh may see no reason why he should not invite his boy friends in for supper any night he feels like it. He knows mother always has extras for guests but he does not realize how much additional labor is involved.

The endeavor to minimize money costs may influence method of performance in a number of ways and raise important problems for the manager in marketing, in the use and care of materials, and in the selection, use, and care of equipment. The market problem will be discussed later in Chapter XVII.

In using materials the desire to reduce money costs leads to the utmost use of all materials involving the expenditure of money. Economy in the utilization of material is an obvious means of minimizing costs and one for which the woman appears directly responsible. The manager may endeavor to buy just the right quantity of material and care for it in such a way as to prevent spoilage, and to use left-overs, and remodel or restore to usefulness materials which would otherwise be valueless. Bread puddings and patch-work quilts made from scraps represent extreme examples of ways of utilizing materials in order to reduce pecuniary costs.

Since waste of material purchased means waste of money income, the manager may be specially concerned about methods of work. A homemade garment worn only a short time because of its poor design and construction, may prove very expensive. Poorly prepared foods find their way to the garbage pail. Cleaning methods which destroy finishes may necessitate replacement or added costs in finishing.

The cost of equipment is also a part of the cost of production. This cost may be, and often is, minimized by the worker having only a limited number of tools. This will represent a real saving of money only if the additional time and energy required of the worker could not be turned to a more profitable use. When equipment is to be purchased the manager is confronted with the problem of deciding what piece of equipment is best for a given purpose, and when and where to buy. Initial and long-run costs must be considered and a study made of how to minimize operating and replacement costs.

REDUCING TIME AND ENERGY COSTS

The desire to save time and energy must operate within the boundaries imposed by the quality of the good desired and a limited money income. Minimum expenditure of time and energy may be desired in order to have a maximum amount of leisure time, or to reduce the fatigue involved in the performance of the tasks, so as to increase the enjoyment derived from leisure. The manager may desire to perform additional tasks during the same period of time without increasing the physical strain. Or she may desire to reduce time and energy because she gets satisfaction from efficiency itself.

In reducing the time and energy necessary for maintaining a certain standard three things may be done. Recurrence of some tasks may be prevented; the best method of performing different tasks may be sought; and finally, tasks may be arranged in such a way as to minimize the time and energy. This last point has already been discussed.

Much time and energy, in many households, go to those tasks whose occurrence might at least in part be prevented. For example, better methods of insulation will check the entrance of dust and dirt. A reduction in the number of dust-collecting surfaces and a change in wall, floor, and furniture finishes might eliminate much cleaning. Adequate kitchen ventilation carrying off the steam of cooking will reduce the labor of cleaning. Well-planned storage places, with adequate shelves, racks, and containers suited to the use to which they are put, lessen the time and energy necessary to maintain a given standard of order. The manager must analyze her task to be aware of the reason for its occurrence, and the conditions under which it might be eliminated or at least be made less frequent.

Occasionally in considering methods the manager has to decide between saving of time or energy. In some tasks time may be saved if the performance is speeded up. But if the fatigue per unit of time is increased, the method may, to many workers, be considered undesirable. It may be that the increased leisure or the additional tasks which may now be performed will compensate for any increased fatigue. Energy may be saved without reducing time spent, e.g., by sitting at certain tasks rather than standing; or by working at a table the "right" height rather than one too low or too high.[7] The time taken to clean a rug with a vacuum cleaner may be the same as when a broom is used, but the vacuum cleaner calls for less energy expenditure. Poor lighting or ventilation or monotony may greatly increase fatigue and sap the energy of the worker without an appreciable effect on the time spent. Sometimes two persons working together may not decrease the total time cost but may so decrease monotony that fatigue is lessened. On the whole though, those things which save time also save energy, and energy savers also reduce the time needed.

Speed and nervous tension affect energy expenditure and also the resulting fatigue. Most workers probably have a natural speed and any other rate increases fatigue. This is an individual thing. But some women work too fast and others too slowly for the maximum utilization of energy. Too high speed may bring nervous tension and later exhaustion. A very slow rate may cause the worker to slump. Speed in moderation may have an exhilarating effect without being in any way harmful. Besides, an increase in speed may increase leisure time, which may be what is needed to reduce fatigue.

The problem of minimizing the expenditure of time and energy varies with the personnel of the workers. It has been frequently observed that the marked interest in time- and labor-saving methods for household tasks in this country is due to the fact that the mistress and the maid are one; the manager is also the worker.

Certain things affecting time and energy are definitely under the manager's control. This is true, for example, in such tasks as cooking, sewing, and cleaning. She, to a large extent, determines the working conditions, the tools, equipment, and materials. For such tasks she becomes interested in the "best" conditions of work, the lighting, heating, ventilation, height of working surfaces, relations of one working area to another not only in the kitchen but throughout the house as well. Information concerning "best" practice, the procedure which will reduce the motions necessary in dishwashing, bed-making, window-washing, and other tasks is desired. Tools and materials to use in the performance of the various tasks are studied. Not only the usefulness of tools in producing the good desired but also the cleaning and care which they require should be estimated.[8]

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[7] See V. N. Swartz, *Human Energy Cost of Certain Household Tasks,* Wash. Agri. Exp. Sta. Bul. 282 (1933).

Custom interferes in many cases with women's using the most efficient tools. Here is a woman who could not bring herself to use an electric range with an automatic time and temperature control, preferring instead a wood range. The former was "just too spooky." Another woman, on being given a washing machine of extractor type, traded it in for a wringer type because the latter "seemed so much more natural."

In some cases working conditions are outside the control of the housewife and can be modified but little by what she considers best. This is particularly true of tasks affected by the structure of the house. The location of walls, doors, windows, and the plumbing system plays an important part in her scheme of work. Changes in these take place gradually as architects study or utilize the findings of experts who have studied the relation of the structure to the performance of tasks. Families to a decreasing extent plan their own houses so the manager is more and more dependent on others to provide her with the kind of house which will minimize labor cost. It frequently happens that housewives find themselves in possession of more efficient kitchens and labor-saving devices not because they were dissatisfied with the old but because better ones are being produced.

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[8] The household manager is often confused by contradictory reports concerning the possibilities of various types of equipment. For example, Good Housekeeping Institute reports that considerable time can be saved by the use of an electric dishwasher: "The actual washing and rinsing of table dishes from a dinner for five people took seven minutes. The same number of dishes were washed and rinsed by hand and placed in a drainer in twenty-two minutes." (American Home Economics Association, "Applications of Electricity to Domestic Use," *J. H. Ec.*, XXII [1930, August], 634.) In contrast with this are the findings of another study of dishwashing which showed no such saving from the use of an electric dishwasher. The minimum requirement for washing a standardized lot of dishes by hand was 22 minutes 58 seconds, whereas for a stationary electric machine the time required was 22 minutes 31 seconds. (Mary K. Heiner and N. Maude Vedder, "Studies in Dishwashing Methods," *J. H. Ec.*, XXII [1930, May], 393-407.)

A reduction of the time and energy required for a given set of tasks may call for increased skill on the part of the worker. The worker may find it almost impossible to criticize her own methods of work. Moreover, since she knows no authority save her own, she may find it difficult to break old habits of work and to adopt the new even though they promise a final, if not an immediate, saving of time and energy. What is needed, in many cases, is pressure from a supervisor who says, "Do this at once." Since no authority apart from the household can dictate methods of work, improvement will come in spite of habit and the inevitable awkwardness and inefficiency during the learning process only if the household manager perceive clearly the advantage of better methods to her and the family.

The time and energy problems of many managers are being reduced or eliminated by the decline in household production and by the increasing number of labor-savers on the market. Many of these are used, however, to only a limited extent. In order to provide herself with the desired labor-savers to reduce the drudgery of certain tasks the household manager is often faced with finding an alternative use for her time which will increase money income. This fact is recognized by many rural extension workers. Hand in hand with their program of "labor-savers for the home" they suggest schemes whereby the farm women may earn money for the purchase of new tools and equipment. When the woman becomes even a part-time gainful worker some of her earnings will usually go to equipment, especially if time thus released can be used in more gainful work.

FATIGUE

Maximum returns at minimum costs should be the guiding principle in using family labor. Fatigue, a human cost, may be due to a long working day, to a poor distribution of work and rest, to too high speed or dawdling, or to a failure to utilize natural rhythm, or provide proper lighting and ventilation, or select methods bringing into play the muscles best adapted to the job. The fatigue which occurs may be caused by more subtle psychological factors: lack of companionship during many hours of the day, dislike for certain tasks or for the job as a whole, discontent at what may be judged an inferior economic status, a sense of futility because days are so full of menial tasks or because efficiency is handicapped by so many different things to be done. Not all causes of fatigue lie in the job itself. Fatigue may be due to worry over low income, family sickness or discord, or other matters. Whatever the cause of fatigue its elimination, wherever it occurs, is a major problem which should be dealt with frankly, recognizing its probable sources. Physical causes can usually be dealt with more easily than psychological. Discontent may be decreased and any sense of futility eliminated through better use of leisure. This possibility is at present largely unexplored.

CHAPTER XVI

PAID LABOR IN THE HOME

Family members, during the past fifty years, have been responsible to an increasing extent for the food preparation, cleaning, care of children, and other tasks performed within the home. During this period the number of full-time household workers has steadily declined. The number of part-time workers has probably increased somewhat, although data to show this change are not available.

Several things have caused this decline. Partly responsible is the falling off of immigration which every year previously brought to our shores many workers accustomed to domestic service in Europe. The opening up of other fields of employment is perhaps even more important. Opportunities in other vocations are especially sought because of American democratic ideals. To escape from the servant class is to improve one's social status. The decrease in size of families and the increase in ready-to-serve foods, ready-to-wear garments, better commercial laundry services, household labor-saving equipment have lessened the need for a paid worker to assist in household tasks. With the increase in housing costs, an extra room for a resident worker has tended to disappear except where a worker is hired year after year.

During the past fifty years, the workers have declined in number. There has been an increase in age level and in the number of married women in the occupation. The proportion of foreign-born workers has decreased and the proportion of negro workers has increased. In 1930 approximately 93 per cent of the household servants were women, 41 per cent of these were native white, 18 per cent foreign-born white, and 40 per cent negroes.[1]

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[1] Servants in working homes were considered to be those not classified as working in connection with any other industry. Fifteenth Census of the United States, Population, Vol. V, *General Report of Occupations.*

HOW IMPORTANT IS PAID LABOR IN THE HOME?

In 1930 for the first time the census bureau published information about the proportion of families with servants living in the home. This is shown in Table XXXI. Over 2 per cent of urban families and less than 1 per cent of rural-farm families had a servant living in the home. More owner than tenant families had servants. Domestic workers who "live out" are not included here.

TABLE XXXI

Percentage of Families Having Servants Living in the Home, but No Lodgers, in the United States, 1930*

Community	All families	Owner families	Tenant families
Total families	1.8	2.5	1.1
Urban families	2.2	3.4	1.3
Rural-farm families	0.9	1.2	0.5
Rural non-farm families	1.5	2.0	1.0

* Fifteenth Census of the United States 1930, *Families*, p. 26.

A recent study of household employment in Chicago by Johnson reveals some interesting facts. Two hundred and fifty employers of full-time workers reported. The average size of their families was only 3.8 persons. Johnson found that few families had special problems due to the presence of very young children, many children, invalids, or aged persons.[2]

Income seems to be the most important factor determining number of full-time workers. Out of 233 employers of full-time workers about 97 per cent had annual incomes of $5,000 and over and two-thirds had annual incomes of $10,000 or over. Among families having full-time servants as the income increased from less than $5,000 to $10,000 or over, full-time workers increased from an average of 1.0 to 1.8 and part-time from 0.1 to 1.3.[3]

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[2] "Household Employment in Chicago," *J. H. Ec.*, 25 (1933, Feb.) 116. In making the study schedules were mailed to women known to employ full-time workers.

[3] President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, Vol. IX, pp. 49-50.

Interesting data are available in a few standard of living studies. Among faculty families at the University of California, Peixotto found:

> All of the families in this faculty group showed a consistent effort to dispense with domestic service or to use a minimum of it. Ten per cent spent nothing for help in the home; 15 per cent less than $25 a year. No family with a total expenditure below $6,000 had full-time domestic service. In the families with incomes above $6,000, two-thirds only paid $200 or more annually for "help."[4]

The lower the income, the less frequently are paid workers found. Yet even in low-income groups some hired help is used. In a study made by the Bureau of Labor in 1918 and 1919 of the family expenditures of wage-earners and low-salaried workers, 7.5 per cent of the families with incomes below $900 spent for domestic service on an average of $9.16 per year. In the income group $2,100 to $2,500, 25.4 per cent of the families had an average yearly expenditure of $39.81.[5]

This study by the Bureau of Labor shows clearly the greater importance of household employees in the South in contrast with

TABLE XXXII

PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES HAVING EXPENDITURES FOR DOMESTIC SERVICE, AND THE AVERAGE AMOUNT SPENT BY THOSE FAMILIES HAVING SUCH EXPENDITURES, AMONG 12,096 WAGE-EARNING AND LOW-SALARIED FAMILIES, IN THE UNITED STATES, 1918–19*

Section of country	Families having the expenditure	
	Percentage of all families	Average amount spent
All	16.0	$25.04
North Atlantic	10.8	21.71
South Atlantic	25.3	29.38
North Central	13.0	21.08
South Central	33.7	30.15
Western	12.9	22.88

* U. S. Dept. of Labor, *Cost of Living in the United States*, Bul. of Bur. of Labor Statistics 357.

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[4] *Getting and Spending at the Professional Standard of Living* (1927), p. 267.

[5] *Cost of Living in the United States*, Bul. Bur. of Labor Statistics 357, p. 455.

the North and West. The difference is shown in Table XXXII. In the South a higher proportion of families reported expenditures for wages than in the North, and, what is even more, the average amount they spent was higher. These two facts are especially important in view of the lower family incomes and lower cost of domestic service in the South in contrast with the North and West.

WHY PAID WORKERS ARE DESIRED

Paid workers are sought both by women trying to combine gainful work with household tasks and by women whose principal job is homemaking. In some families paid workers are hired to relieve the woman of physical strain which might be injurious to her health. Or paid assistance may be secured in order to increase her leisure time or free her entirely from household responsibilities during certain periods, thus permitting her to share in certain social activities. Energy left at the end of the day influences leisure activities almost as much as free time. Fatiguing tasks are delegated to the paid workers, the lighter, more pleasant, less exhausting tasks being performed by the employer. So that as well as having more free time she also has more energy for reading, meditation, music, family and community social activities.

Emulation, the social prestige of having a maid, may lead many families to look upon one or more servants as essential. Or a part-time worker for certain tasks such as laundry work and general cleaning may be necessary to avoid the social stigma of performing so-called menial tasks.

Paid workers are desired for another very important reason. Having a servant and being without one may represent two entirely different standards of living. Not only are the time and energy of family members released but with a servant in the home higher standards in some things may be maintained, for example, order and cleanliness in the home and table service. The greatest change in standard occurs in those tasks which must be performed at the time of consumption. From the consumer's point of view, table service with and that without a maid are very different. Identical foods may be served, the same linen, china, and silver used, but the total result is by no means the same. The difference in satisfaction, resulting from family or maid service at the table, is likely to be most marked if guests are being entertained. Hence, in certain homes, hospitality declines if satisfactory paid service cannot be secured. It is easier to entertain one's friends at a club or restaurant than before one's own blazing hearth, especially when there is no one to prepare refreshments, wash the dishes, and sweep up the ashes the next morning.

CAN I AFFORD A PAID WORKER?

The household manager cannot face this question in the same way as the manager of a business enterprise. The worker's wage, in the latter case, is met by his contribution to the gross income. But the household employee does not contribute to the fund from which her wages are paid. How then can the advantage of her employment be determined? Through paid service it is possible to have services or utilities which you could not otherwise have: for example, the privilege of the family sharing dinner together without members leaving the table to serve, or having someone at home responsible for emergencies. Paid workers may produce goods of a better quality or at a lower cost than those which could be purchased. On this basis, a laundress may be hired rather than use made of the commercial laundry. The advantage of paid service often lies in the time and energy of family members thus released. The use of this time must be taken into consideration in judging the advantage of a paid worker. The time may be turned to other household production. It may be used for leisure or for gainful work. If the time released is turned to gainful employment the advantage of paid labor may be evident. Additional money income may more than pay the wages. If the time is used for other household production or leisure, the advantage is not so clear. Decisions must be based on the probable utility of the leisure time or other goods contributed by household production, in contrast with those market goods which can no longer be purchased if more of the money income goes to a household employee.

If the purpose of the manager is to release family time and energy, various ways of doing so should be considered. The relative advantage of special labor-saving equipment, of market goods in a more completed stage, and of increased use of agencies such as laundries and other cleaning establishments should be compared with paid service in the house. It is of interest that Wilson found homemakers more interested in improving houses and equipment than in employing help.[6] In addition, the advantages of part-time and full-time workers should be contrasted.

The direct monetary cost of household employees includes more than wages. Some meals are usually given and, if a worker lives in, one or more rooms must be provided. What is the cost of these? The cost of meals can usually be roughly estimated. If the room is available anyway and could not or would not be used or rented then the room actually costs the family nothing except perhaps depreciation due to use. Very different is the case where the family has to move to a larger apartment or house in order to provide the needed room. The possibility of increased cost due to greater waste should be considered. On the other hand, it may happen that the employee is more skillful than her mistress and waste is reduced. Both of these factors are very difficult to estimate.

Other costs may change if a servant is hired. For example, the family's own standard of food may be raised since emulation may become more important when consumption is no longer so private.

COSTS OTHER THAN MONEY

Money costs are important in most families, but an estimate of costs should not stop there. Consumer satisfaction may decline if the worker is so inefficient in some tasks that the quality of products is below that customarily enjoyed. The household manager may find herself confronted with the rather exacting

[6] *The Use of Time by Oregon Farm Homemakers,* p. 25.

problem of training a very unskilled worker. Her delight in efficiency and in high standards of sanitation, order, and cleanliness in the kitchen may be turned to dismay and perhaps to concern for the family health when even after weeks of training confusion, disorder and unsanitary practices prevail. The intelligence and training of the workers available will largely determine whether the household manager is likely to encounter these human costs.

Privacy, a sense of the house belonging to the family alone, is very highly valued by many people. Bringing in a paid worker reduces this to some extent. The personality of the worker, her honesty, possible influence on children, and curiosity regarding family affairs become very important. Concern about family privacy is greatest if the employee lives in the home. The worker is admitted to the house, which may be small with a more or less intimate arrangement of rooms, and yet she is not one in the social life of the family. For her eating and bathing and the entertainment of her guests special arrangements must usually be made. The problem, as seen by many housewives, is how to bring a worker into the home yet keep her in her place. In England class lines are more distinct and differences in social status more generally accepted than they are here. As a result the English mistress does not experience the difficulty encountered by the household employer in America in maintaining the social distinctions which she may desire. Because of this difficulty many household managers declare that American girls do not make good servants. Instead they may seek European immigrants who have had domestic experience, and frequently complain that all too soon they become infected with the prevailing ideals of social democracy.

Children's willingness to co-operate is influenced by the presence of a paid worker. A task or the sharing of a task may have an educational value. When members of the family are responsible, sympathy for one who is overburdened, delight in group enterprise, or companionship in sharing the tasks may stimulate the necessary co-operation. These appeals are likely to have less weight when the tasks are shared with or are relieving a paid worker. This is especially true when class distinction is emphasized.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT HOUSEHOLD EMPLOYMENT

Many household managers seeking or engaging paid workers find the labor supply far from satisfactory. Workers are frequently very inefficient. Many are unwilling to do all kinds of work. Advertisements in "Domestic Help Wanted" columns often read: "Laundry sent out, no heavy cleaning," "Three in family, no children." Short hours and special privileges are demanded by many workers. Wages are often considered too high. Women complain too that workers do not know their places.

On the other hand, workers complain that the work is too indefinite and hours are too long, and that it is hard to discover before entering a job what the hours or tasks will be.[7] Demands made on their time are often considered unreasonable, and increased efficiency does not bring advancement. The workers are isolated and lack companionship. Dislike for the job is intensified by the social stigma attached. Both on the job and, to some extent, in society as a whole workers are looked upon as social inferiors. Part payment for wages is often given in the form of board and room when cash might be more acceptable. Living-in may be required; and this may interfere with normal social relationships and, in most cases, it carries with it rather close supervision of personal life.

To understand these complaints and ways of improving the status of household labor it is necessary to examine the fundamental differences between this and other jobs and see household employment as one of the many occupations a worker may enter.

In analyzing household employment and contrasting it with other occupations Rubinow expressed the belief that "the peculiarities of the servant's position are due to the survival of mediaeval terms of contract."[8] At that time in most gainful work it was the person who was hired and not just his labor. He might be called upon to render service at any time during the day or night. Personal actions were also supervised. Friction naturally arises when this patriarchal relationship lingers in a society where hours of work in most occupations are definite and relationship of employer and employee is for the most part impersonal.

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[7] In the Chicago study already referred to 250 household employees reported conditions of work. "The findings of the study indicate that in 50 per cent of the households a working day of 10 hours, which includes time for meals, was sufficient to care for the needs of the household on week days and 6 hours on Sunday," p. 117.

Living-in may be favored by employers because the worker is handy for emergencies and can be supervised to see that she gets adequate rest. Furthermore, it may seem the cheapest way of paying wages since in many cases the room involves no additional expense. The employee may object to living-in because it increases the possibility of unreasonable demands and the supervision of personal actions. Difference in social status is also more emphasized and greater attention given to the superiority of the employer in contrast with the employee.

Complaints that workers do not know their place are probably more frequent in one-servant households, where artificial barriers between the family and the worker are more necessary than in households where several servants are engaged. This difficulty is also more frequent in households where the employer's time is largely given to leisure activities than in farm households where the housewife usually works almost as long hours as the employee.

Living-in in many cases may result in failure of the worker to have normal social relationships. If hours are long and free time is limited there is little possibility of visiting family and friends. The difficulty may be overcome if time off is increased or arranged at more satisfactory hours or if better facilities are arranged for social contacts at the house where the employee lives. The household employee's need for companionship in hours off is greater than that of most workers because she is isolated in her work.

Not all workers consider living-in a disadvantage. In a study reported by the Women's Bureau only 34.4 per cent of the women under 18 years and 44.7 per cent 20 to 25 years expressed a preference to live out.[9] After 30 years of age is reached the worker becomes more willing to live in.

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[8] "The Problem of Domestic Service," *J. Pol. Ec.*, 14 (1906), p. 514.

It seems probable that living-in will decline. More and more full-time paid workers will be hired only at the peak of the housekeeping load. It will not be economical to provide housing accommodations for such a temporary need. Many families have extra rooms that can be used for servants. This happens because houses are durable, many having been built in days of large families and lower building costs, when pretentious homes were looked upon as a very desirable means of displaying wealth.

Complaints about inefficiency may be due to the fact that the household manager expects too much. The following statement, though exaggerated, illustrates the point: "Most persons needing household help want someone who possesses business ability enough to care for the ordering, compute grocery bills, and maintain her dignity at front and back door; they would like her to have the same discretion in respect to the confidential matter which comes to her ears as does the private secretary in her husband's office; they yearn for a girl who is loyal, who can plan a day's program and carry it out, who is skillful in cooking, cleaning and caring for children."[10] All this for $12 a week.

Too much may be expected in many cases, but it is also true that inefficiency is common. The unspecialized character of the work is partly responsible. Some of the tasks, it is true, require little skill, but others require a great deal if an acceptable product is to be produced, and many workers are untrained. The unstandardized condition of household methods also interferes with efficiency. A worker whose methods are acceptable to one employer may be rated as very inefficient by another. The tendency to standardization of household methods will in time help to raise the level of efficiency among workers.

Inefficiency is also due to lack of training. Many people still labor under the delusion that a woman naturally knows how to cook, clean, and care for babies, and that no training is necessary other than that which one receives from one's mother. At one time this home training was adequate, but daughters are now receiving less experience in homes and those who enter household employment seldom take preparatory training. The frequent absence of a wage differential between the efficient experienced worker and one without training or experience is partly responsible for failure to prepare for the work. Furthermore, the disadvantages of household employment prevent preparatory training since girls usually enter it only as a last resort or as a makeshift till "something better turns up." In addition, a worker with vocational training may find it of little value if her employer insists that her individual methods be used.

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[9] Bul. 39, p. 32.

[10] J. L. Welch, "Help Wanted," *Survey,* 57 (1927, Jan. 15), 520.

Housewives, at the present time, must on the whole assume responsibility for training the workers. Some women are experts in this matter, but many others do not possess the necessary knowledge and patience, nor are they willing to take time. Discouragement may come too soon. Robinson, after analyzing the household employment problem, says: "Many employers, expecting more than they have a right to from workers so trained, are kept in a turmoil of dissatisfaction, and the workers, realizing their inability to measure up to such high expectations, tend to become indifferent and even shiftless."[11]

Much of the discontent about training workers in the home arises from the fact that the woman who takes the trouble to train her workers may not reap the benefit. This increases the need for having a minimum of training in vocational or household apprenticeship courses. Less discontent about training workers in the home would arise if workers were paid according to their ability and were willing to work for less in homes where the manager was able and willing to give careful training.

One of the effects of social stigma is to cause many superior girls who might enter household employment to seek other vocations. This lowers the general level of intelligence and efficiency especially among white native and foreign-born household employees. The social status of negroes is bound up with other things so they are not so likely to resent the inferior status which goes with domestic service.

Much is heard about inefficiency. It may be unduly emphasized because satisfied household managers have the least to say.

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[11] Women's Bureau Bul. 39, p. 53.

Kyrk in reporting a study of household employment in Chicago says:

> Two surprising results of the Chicago study were the stability of the workers and their efficiency as rated by the employer. . . . Over half of the Chicago workers had been with present employers more than five years and the great majority of them were rated as "good" in their various tasks rather than "fair" or "poor." The suggestion is that there are two groups in household employment, the permanent, stable, experienced group and those who drift in and out, who, combined with the younger untrained workers, make up a competing group of cheap labor working often under highly unsatisfactory conditions.[12]

Household managers frequently complain about the high wages that they must pay. Wages paid to household employees are, at times, relatively high in contrast with wages in jobs calling for approximately the same skill and training, and certainly they have risen considerably in the past fifty years. During this period opportunities in other vocations have reduced the supply. Moreover, if a job is for any reason disagreeable workers naturally seek other occupations even though wages are lower. The character of the job for which housewives as a whole are responsible repels many enterprising workers who might enter; it decreases the supply, and raises the wages as well as decreases the efficiency of the group.

It often happens that the household employer pays higher wages than is necessary. A more efficient worker at a lower wage might have been available. But knowledge of the supply is likely to be very limited. Kyrk in describing the situation says:

> Thousands of individual bargains as to work to be done, wages, hours and accommodations are made, inevitably with wide discrepancies. It is true that competitive forces work. The isolated worker learns in time of the higher wages and shorter hours of another job; the employer hears from her friends of competent workers available at lower rates and fires and hires again. But as compared with the known and uniform rates and hours of large business concerns this work is unstandardized and haphazard.[13]

[12] "The Household Worker," *American Federationist,* 39 (1932, Jan.), 37.

[13] *Op. cit.,* p. 35.

Workers have two major complaints about wages, namely, they are low and workers of varying degrees of efficiency are paid the same. Low wages are likely to occur especially in periods of unemployment when employees dismissed from other jobs and wives whose husbands are out of work turn to household employment as an occupation anyone can enter. Only if experience counts do the regular workers have any protection.

When we examine the failure to reward increased or greater efficiency with higher wages, a number of things stand out. Haphazard incomplete information prevents the woman who is willing to pay most from always getting the most efficient workers. The amount the woman is willing to pay tends to depend on how much money she feels she can spare from other uses. The increased efficiency of the household employee, if it goes merely to raising the family's standard of living, does not increase the employer's ability to pay. If it actually decreases money expenditures that would otherwise have been incurred, perhaps by reducing waste or making in place of buying, the increased efficiency can be said to contribute money income to the family. The household manager is not always aware of this fact and, even if she is, may look upon it as reward for her management, not necessarily a product of the worker's labor. If wages cannot be increased, efficiency can, however, be rewarded by shorter hours. This may call for more care in planning than the manager is willing to give.

To the extent that household employment is standardized, hours brought more in line with those in other occupations, and a more satisfactory social life for workers made possible, the household managers will probably find the labor supply increasing, wages tending to be lower, and the level of efficiency raised. These things are likely to come slowly. Social attitude is rooted in tradition which lingers long after the conditions which created it. So the household worker will not, overnight, find the social stigma wiped out. Management in the home is largely based on habit. A sense of superiority leads many housewives to do without a worker rather than change their ways with respect to servants.

In many homes conditions under which workers labor and live are entirely satisfactory. There is needed, however, a wider understanding of the actual status of household labor and underlying causes of difficulty; in addition we need an educational program which reaches both employers and employees. More widespread and more efficient employment exchanges with information concerning jobs and workers available would, in many cities, reduce complaints a great deal.

ORGANIZATIONS TO IMPROVE HOUSEHOLD EMPLOYMENT

From time to time, organizations have been specially formed to improve the status of domestic service, e.g., the Domestic Reform League of the Women's Educational and Industrial Union in Boston in 1897, the Household Aid Company also in Boston in 1903-5, and the Domestic Efficiency Association in Baltimore in 1924. The Young Women's Christian Association has for years taken an active part in improving working and living conditions in homes and in providing recreation and wider social contacts for workers.

The whole problem of paid labor in the home is being studied at the present time by the National Committee on Employer-Employee Relationships in the Home. This committee was organized in 1928. Both the Young Women's Christian Association and the American Home Economics Association are very active in this organization. The purposes of the permanent committee are:

> To learn what is being done now and has been done in this field, and to evaluate the experience thus gathered, considering such problems as standards of employment, education, placement and follow-up, legislation and organization; to formulate a program of research and experimentation; to seek the co-operation of agencies working in this field in carrying out this program.[14]

This committee has drawn up suggested minimum standards for a full-time worker. These are:

> In each community a minimum wage for the full-time worker in household employment, whether skilled or unskilled,

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[14] Editorial, "Employer-Employee Relationships in the Home," *J. H. Ec.* XXI (1929, Feb.), 121.

> should be established that meets the cost of living of independent women at a tolerable level.
>
> The maximum length of the "working time" of the worker living in should not exceed 54 hours a week and of the worker living out, 48 hours.
>
> Two hours on call should be considered equivalent to one hour of working time.
>
> Overtime in any week should be paid for at an hourly rate.
>
> One whole day, beginning not later than 10 A.M. and extending through the evening, or two half days a week, beginning not later than 2 P.M. on week days and 3 P.M. on Sundays and extending through the evening, should be free.
>
> One week vacation with pay after a year of continuous service should be provided.
>
> The worker living in should have a room for her own use, and convenient access to modern bathroom facilities.[15]

It is further recommended that the employer-employee relationship supplant the mistress-maid.

Some employment agencies have a very wholesome effect on the status of household employment. They have drawn up requirements to safeguard the interests of employers and employees. A well-organized agency is a clearing-house of information for both parties. Wages are likely to be more standardized. The better workers are more likely to get the more highly paid positions and thus have an incentive for efficiency. Before entering into a contract, information can be had concerning working and living conditions which before could be secured only through experience.

Employment agencies are not always able to get the information desired; and what is secured may not be true to fact. The experience of the parties involved may be too limited or information may be withheld. It may not seem advisable to try to get all facts which would be of value. The president of the Domestic Efficiency Association in Baltimore in explaining why no records were made of employees' opinions says: "There is no subject on which women are so touchy, or so irascible, as upon their own personal management of their own personal homes. Any association which professed to record the opinions of employees as to

[15] *The Literary Digest,* 109 (1931, May 9), 23.

their employers would be doomed at birth." Criticism from "inferiors" could not be endured. The writer goes on to add, however, that employees' opinions are considered.[16] The difficulty in recording both sides is a real one which needs to be surmounted in some way if household employment is to be put on a sounder basis.

Some employment agencies specialize in the quality of service they provide, and train and supervise the workers as well. An example is Scientific Housekeeping, Inc., in New York City. It trains and supervises expert household workers on the basis of an eight-hour day and a six-day week, assuming full responsibility for the management of the home when the employer desires that service. The employees are carefully selected before being admitted for training.

To an increasing extent, in recent years, school girls and college women have been partly earning their way by household employment. In most places this has been carried on under supervision. For these groups have been developed definite standards in regard to wages, duties, hours of work, time off, personal and social obligations, and living conditions if the student lives in. Social stigma on the whole has tended to disappear. This standardization of conditions should be an active force in improving household employment as a whole.

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[16] Women's Bureau, *Domestic Workers and Their Employment Relations,* Bul. 39, p. 14.

CHAPTER XVII

THE HOUSEHOLD BUYER AND THE MARKET

To supply her family needs the housewife must turn first of all to the market. The abundance of goods and services enjoyed depends to a large extent on her efficiency as a buyer. An efficient buyer is one who secures the maximum of goods for the time, energy, and money expended.

In her buying the housewife must decide: (1) where to buy; (2) when to buy; (3) what quantity to buy; (4) whether to buy bulk or packaged goods; (5) how to pay for goods; and (6) how to recognize the qualities desired and judge whether she is getting the most for her money.

The position of the household buyer presents a striking contrast to that of the purchasing agents of the government or of a large business enterprise. In their case, buying is their only job. They buy a limited variety of goods; and they buy in large quantities. It is usually worth their while to spend much time searching for possible alternatives and making elaborate tests in order to discover whether the product under consideration is the best available, or the best in view of price. They may even specify the product desired and have it made to order.

The position of the household buyer is different in every respect. Her purchases are small scale. She must select from among the goods offered those most nearly suited to her needs. Only if her income is very high can she have goods made to order. Small-quantity buying does not permit extensive shopping or testing of goods. Spending is often crowded into "spare moments." The woman is often more of an amateur at this task than at any other of the many tasks she performs. A multitude of very different goods must be selected. Without training and with very little experience she must match her wits against salesmen skilled in the art of selling, salesmen whose philosophy has largely been *Caveat emptor*, "Let the buyer beware."

WHERE TO BUY

Never before has the housewife had such a variety of shops among which to choose. From the retailer around the corner, the peddler at her door, in many nearby shopping centers, or from mail-order houses she may be able to secure the goods desired. Price and quality of goods are probably the two most important things considered in choosing a store. Within certain limits these must be acceptable before a store is considered in any way satisfactory. The convenience of having many different kinds of goods assembled in one place often is important. A woman may prefer a department store to specialty shops because several things she wants are assembled under one roof. Certain farm families when questioned said they did not care whether they patronized a chain store or an independent store, provided it had a meat counter, which enabled them to buy all their food in one place.[1]

Variety from which to select is important in the case of clothing and household furnishings. Choice of store is also determined by its distance from home and its proximity to other shops. The services offered are important, e.g., delivery, credit, guarantee and returned goods privilege, freedom to shop around, examine labels and price tags, and the service of trained clerks able to aid in selection. The sanitation and attractiveness of the store, pleasant relations with clerks and management, honesty in such matters as weight and description of the goods, also influence choice. The various advantages and disadvantages of different stores must be carefully weighed if wise selection of store is to be made.

Choice of store will be influenced by the relative importance of time and energy in contrast with money. Buying practices which save money may have a high time and energy cost, or *vice versa.* If time and energy are limited, especially time free to leave the house, shopping around is reduced to a minimum. Neighborhood stores are used. After a satisfactory store has been located patronage is continued. In place of shopping about in numerous specialty stores, department stores are sought. Mail-order may be used in place of a trip to the county seat or even a day's shopping downtown. Telephone and delivery service will be used. On the other hand, if money-saving is important, or if shopping is recreational, considerable time is often spent looking for the best price or the most satisfactory quality.

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[1] Cornell Exp. Sta. Bul. 561, p. 31. In this study information was obtained during the summer of 1929 by personal visits to 368 farm homes in four counties.

In comparing prices the buyer is interested not only in the general price level of the store but also in the prices of specific commodities. This is especially true of a grocery store where many different things are purchased at one time. Differences in quality and slight difference in weight of package and the possibility of overcharging due to short weight make price comparisons very difficult. The United States Department of Agriculture in an extensive study of retail meat markets found much misrepresentation of quality, weight, and price. Price comparisons should be made on the basis of pounds, yards, or dozens or some other standard unit. Price quotations for packages are of no value. Dealers at times admitted that they used fractions on their price cards to confuse customers. Investigators found that customers were being overcharged from a few cents up to 75 cents on purchases.[2] Stores which do not consistently adhere to a "one-price policy," where a shrewd buyer by bargaining can get a lower price, should be avoided by those who dislike higgling or who can give little time to market selection. To save money, cash-and-carry stores will be patronized and elaborate display and a high level of services will not be demanded.

Since only a small quantity of any one thing is bought, extensive shopping, involving considerable time, energy, or transportation cost, is seldom worth while except for high-priced goods, e.g., some garments and house furnishings. A store close at hand is usually selected for goods bought frequently and in small quantities, as groceries and meat.

For many goods relatively little shopping occurs. In a study of the habits of 2,860 housewives purchasing meat it was found that 56.9 per cent stated that they never shopped among the stores; 31.2 per cent said that they shopped around only sometimes. Only 11.9 per cent shopped a good deal. In the wealthy group less shopping occurred than in the lower-income group. For high-income families quality of meat and good services were relatively important in selecting a meat store to patronize, and convenience of location and economical price were relatively unimportant.[3]

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[2] *Methods and Processes of Retailing Meat,* Dept. Bul. 1441 (1926), p. 15.

In discovering the best place to buy, the household buyer must rely on advertising and on her own experience and that of friends. A systematic comparison of price is often necessary in order to see through loss leaders, which are used to create the impression that prices as a whole are unusually low. Newspaper advertisements aid the household buyer, but in most cases the information provided is very limited. On any given day there are differences from store to store in the price of identical goods but it is not known how long these differences persist. Comparisons of prices in chain and independent grocery stores throw some light on these differences.

In Chicago during April, 1930, for example, prices of 75 advertised brands of products widely consumed were secured. The saving from buying in chain stores approximated 10 per cent. The more efficient independents were, however, not being appreciably undersold by the chains. Although chains on the whole had lower prices than independents the lowest price quoted for all but 13 of the 75 items was by independents. On the other hand the highest price on each of the 75 items was quoted by independents.[4]

If these data are representative of prices in chain and independent grocery stores one can conclude that if the household buyer has little time to shop around for her groceries but can visit the store herself she will probably save money by patronizing a chain store. Among the neighborhood independent stores may be some whose prices are as low as any chain. The higher price which goes with telephone, delivery, and credit service in an independent store may be entirely acceptable to the housewife. It may be also that the quality desired can best be secured in the independent rather than the chain. In mass retailing, chains specialize only on qualities for which they can secure a large volume of sales. Little attempt is made to cater to individual needs.

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[3] *Consumers' Habits and Preferences in the Purchase and Consumption of Meat,* U. S. Dept of Agri. Bul. 1443 (1926), p. 32.

[4] E. Bjorklund and J. L. Palmer, *A Study of Prices of Chains and Independent Grocers in Chicago* (1930). See also, M. D. Taylor, "Prices in Chain and Independent Grocery Stores in Durham, N. C.," *Har. Bus. Rev.,* 8 (1930), 413-24.

Table XXXIII gives a picture of the buying practices of families in the United States in 1929. Nearly three-fourths of the goods purchased in department stores were bought in stores independently owned. The same is true of furniture and drug stores and all clothing stores other than shoe stores. People turn to chain stores more frequently for shoes and groceries than for most other things.

TABLE XXXIII

The Volume of Sales by Different Retail Stores and the Relative Importance of Sales by Independents and Chains in the United States, 1929*

Kind of business	Volume of sales in 000's of dollars	Percentage of total sales made by		
		Single, 2 and 3 store independents and local branch systems	Local, sectional, and national chains	Other
Department stores	4,350,098	72.3	16.6	11.1
Variety, 5 and 10, and to-a-dollar stores	904,147	9.8	90.1	0.1
Men's and boys' clothing and furnishing stores	1,192,723	77.9	21.2	0.9
Family clothing stores	552,353	71.5	27.3	1.2
Women's ready-to-wear specialty stores	1,087,601	74.3	22.7	3.0
Shoe stores	806,829	53.5	38.0	8.5
Furniture stores	1,509,815	83.9	14.2	1.9
Grocery stores (without meat)	3,449,149	48.6	45.7	5.7
Combination store (groceries and meat)	3,903,662	63.1	32.2	4.7
Drug stores	1,690,399	81.1	18.5	0.4

* Fifteenth Census of the United States 1930, *Distribution*, Vol. I, p. 71.

Among 368 New York farm families reporting in 1928-9, chain stores were patronized much more frequently for food than for clothing, furnishings, and equipment. Families who patronized chain groceries on being asked to give reasons why they did so stated:[5]

1. They believed chain stores had lower-priced food than independent stores had.
2. The customer could see and compare prices and select the variety desired.
3. The customer could benefit from weekly sales.
4. The customer did not have to pay more in order that others could obtain credit; it was felt that chain stores were a benefit because they did away with credit; if people needed credit they could borrow money from the bank and pay interest; that amount of money saved by buying from chain stores and mail-order houses would more than pay the interest.

The families who patronized independent grocery stores and objected to chain stores gave as their reasons the following:

1. They knew and liked the owner; he was a personal friend, or was very accommodating and gave them credit and delivery service if they desired it.
2. The independent stores would accept their produce (eggs, butter, milk, beef, and fruits) in exchange for staple commodities.[6]
3. The families believed that the goods at the independent stores were of higher grade, and therefore worth a few cents more; the chain stores sold food at a lower price, but it was thought that the goods were of poorer quality; some of the families stated that they had objected to the chain stores when they carried their own private brands, but had commenced to trade there as soon as those stores began to carry the nationally advertised brands, such as Ivory soap, Del Monte and Libby's canned fruits and canned vegetables, and White House and Chase & Sanborn coffee.
4. The families believed that the chain stores were a detriment to the farmers; they considered the chain movement tended to lower the prices of farm produce; also, the chain-store managers did not keep their balances in the local banks.

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[5] M. Fish, *Buying for the Household,* Cornell Exp. Sta. Bul. 561, pp. 31-2. See also U. S. Dept. of Com., *The Retailer and the Consumer in New England,* Trade Information Bul. 575 (1928), pp. 64-6.

[6] There was some difference in opinion regarding this point; a few families stated that the chain stores where they traded would accept their produce as willingly as the independent retailers would.

WHEN TO BUY

One infallible rule can be laid down. This applies to all buyers, both family and business: so far as possible, anticipate need, do not delay purchases until need is urgent or an unduly high price may have to be paid at the corner grocery, or perhaps a dress selected which is "not just what was wanted but will do."

Other matters must be considered, for example, what hour, day, or month is best for buying sheets, strawberries, coal, hats, and all the other things to be purchased. Several things will influence a household buyer's decision. The first is quality. For example, fresh supplies of fruits and vegetables for the week-end may be delivered at the store she patronizes on Friday. Home storage facilities may be better than those of the store. A woman may wish to buy her dresses and hats at the beginning of the season so they are modish even though later on the price on similar garments may be much less. If crowds tire her she will plan to shop and buy early in the morning and will probably avoid Saturday and pre-holiday crowds. Price changes will also influence her decision of when to buy. In many cases this is the most decisive factor.

Prices on some goods are much the same the year round. On others there is considerable variation from week to week and season to season. If one takes advantage of bottom prices many dollars will be saved. Price changes in some cases are due to seasonal change in supply. If money saving is important the household buyer should be familiar with these changes and plan to use goods freely at the peak of the season when prices are low, or buy and store for future use. Substitutes should be sought when prices are high.

The household buyer, by even a brief study, can become somewhat acquainted with seasonal change in the price of meats, fresh fruits, and vegetables. A decline in price with seasonal products does not signify poorer quality. Prices of these products in the central and wholesale markets are reported in metropolitan newspapers. Systematic news of price changes in the retail market would greatly benefit the household buyer.

Seasonal change in price may occur because of change in demand. Thus we have special prices for coal and furs in July and August, for winter clothing in February, and summer clothing in late August and early September. People come to expect lower prices at certain times. Retailers may take advantage of this expectation. For example, during August sales and again late in September the Cincinnati Better Business Bureau made a study of fur prices. "Thirty-seven coats were 'shopped' by bureau representatives during August and identified again in September. Only 22 of the 37 were marked up in September."[7]

Furniture and white-wear sales are especially conspicuous during certain months. These arose to stimulate trade during dull seasons. As customers more and more postpone their purchases to benefit from these sales the reductions in prices are likely to lessen. A store cannot afford to have the great bulk of sales concentrated at a time when prices are extremely low. In some cases stores announce customary sales, have a few leaders, and in one way or another create a general impression of price reduction. They may even be able to sell an increased volume of goods at a slightly higher price level. The store managers are capitalizing on the people's expectation of the customary sale.

Prices tend to be lower at certain times because competition is especially keen. In many towns more "specials" are offered on Saturday than on any other day. Some study has been made of the saving thus made possible.

> Students in the home management classes at the University of Washington found that, working with a theoretical budget, food for one week for a family of five, purchased at regular prices, cost $11.31. The same food purchased at Saturday sales, when special prices were featured, cost $8.84, a saving of almost 22 per cent of the total food cost.[8]

Further studies along this line would be of interest.

So-called "bargains" and "special" sales are an established part of our market. A bargain to be real must be offered at a price below regular; and the household buyer's knowledge of the market is so limited that she must in many cases accept the shopkeeper's word that prices are lower than usual. Odd prices suggesting reduction may be the result of raising prices. A study of sales in the Liggett stores led to the conclusion that from the point of view of sales 19 cents is just as good as any price between 15 and 19 cents, and that 79 cents is considered just as good if not better than 75.[9]

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[7] S. H. Slichter, *Modern Economic Society,* p. 550.

[8] President's Conference, *Home Management and Kitchens,* Vol. IX, p. 71.

If the household buyer knows why special sales are put on she is less likely to be led into unwise purchasing. Bargains are primarily for the benefit of the seller. They are often used as leaders to bring people to the store in the hope that they will buy other goods as well. They are used to move overstocks or articles passing out of style. Such sales come at the end of the season to clear shelves for new stock. But wise buying by the retailer tends to limit the volume of these.

Sales often consist of defective goods, seconds, and broken lines. Some of these may be real bargains. Special shipments of goods may be ordered from manufacturers in order to satisfy the demand for bargains. These goods are often very inferior in quality.

Since bargains in many cases exploit the household buyer's ignorance, at a bargain sale more than at any other time she needs to be on her guard against high price and inferior quality. The bargain tends to concentrate her attention on price, of which she knows very little, and on immediate purchase, and to divert her mind from the quality and her particular need for the good.

Some housewives have learned to be wary, perhaps even too much so. The attitude of certain housewives to "bargain sales" has been brought out in a study made recently in New England. Sixty-three per cent of the housewives replying said they were not taking advantage of sales. In 53 per cent of the cases sales had lost their appeal through frequency; 62 per cent of the housewives were not convinced that sale goods were the same as goods formerly offered at a higher price.[10]

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[9] *Printers' Ink,* 140 (1927, Sept. 22), 25.

[10] U. S. Dept. of Com., *The Retailer and the Consumer in New England,* Bul. 575 (1928), p. 63. Questionnaires were returned from 3,872 consumers.

WHAT QUANTITY TO BUY

On the whole the larger the quantity purchased the lower is the per unit cost. Probably this is true more frequently in the case of food than of clothing and house furnishing. In food purchasing the household buyer may find herself debating whether to buy a quarter-pound or a one-pound can of baking-powder, a 14-ounce jar or a two-pound can of peanut butter, one-half or a one-pound cake of chocolate, a half dozen cans or a case of tomatoes. In some instances the difference in per unit cost in cents is slight. A 25 to 35 per cent saving is not uncommon, however. Size of family, storage facilities, possibility of spoilage if the product is perishable, the likelihood of waste in cooking because of the quantity on hand or the using of what is on hand when a cheaper product would do, the amount of money that can be spared at present, the possibility of a lower or a higher price later, should all influence the quantity purchased. Sometimes the possibility of the family members eating on the sly the supplies intended for a special use may result in the purchase of only enough for the present. Nuts, certain fruits, and cookies may be purchased in small quantities because of this. Even though no money is saved by the larger purchase the time saving may be important.

Buying practices of 368 farm families in New York state in 1928 to 1929 reveal almost half the families buying sugar in 100- or 200-pound lots. At the same time 70 per cent were buying flour in 24.5-pound sacks. Preference for this quantity seemed due to the fact that the small sack fitted into the cupboard space allotted to flour. It was generally recognized that flour in larger sacks was cheaper. Canned foods were usually bought one or two cans at a time. Some families stated that they bought only small quantities because they had only enough cash to meet needs and did not want to ask for credit.[11] This practice seems to bear out the common saying, "Prices are higher for the poor than the rich."

Large quantity buying is more difficult than buying in small quantities. It calls for a more careful study of the family needs. The manager must look beyond the present. Furthermore, she may have to make special inquiry in regard to price. When it is customary for goods to be sold in one-package lots no price for case lots may be posted.

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[11] Marion Fish, *Buying for the Household as Practiced by 368 Farm Families in New York, 1928-29,* Cornell Exp. Sta. Bul. 361, pp. 27-8.

BULK OR PACKAGE

Packaged goods have year by year replaced those previously sold unwrapped or packaged in the store. This change is partly caused by the invention of machines reducing the cost of packaging in factories. Also important are the increasing dirt of cities, higher standards of sanitation, the opportunity wrappings afford for display and use of brand names, and the greater ease in handling the product at home. This last affects the purchase of many foods. There are still, however, many cases, especially of certain types of food, where the household buyer might well consider whether bulk or package is better. Among the group of New York farm families referred to many foods were bought in bulk. Especially important were bacon, butter, cheese, macaroni, and prunes. People said they considered it cheaper not to pay for the packaging and preferred to see what they were buying. Relatively few, however, bought coffee, crackers, or oatmeal in bulk.[12]

HOW TO PAY FOR GOODS

Cash or credit? Instalment buying or saving until the needed sum is available? These are questions which perplex many modern household buyers. In 1929 those stores, which reported whether or not they gave credit, sold goods valued at about 43 billion dollars; and about 15 billion of these goods was sold on credit. Almost 3 billion of this was instalment credit. About half of the retail stores gave no credit. However, the sales in these stores constituted only 35 per cent of the total sales reported.

In deciding how goods should be paid for, alternative methods should be weighed, and consideration given to all advantages and disadvantages involved. Cash may be favored over credit because immediate payment checks any tendency to spending more than income. Some household buyers find they shop around more if they have no charge account. Advantage can thus be taken of lower prices in those stores which extend no credit or where no account has been established. On the other hand, credit may be considered more convenient. Bills are paid with checks not cash; accounts are more easily kept; better service may be secured in some stores, e.g., goods may be more easily returned if charged than if cash is paid. Besides if one has a charge account and the need arises, goods can be purchased before money is available for payment.

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[12] *Ibid.* p. 30.

Instalment buying is a form of credit having special pitfalls for the household buyer. For one thing, aggressive selling is an outstanding characteristic; in addition to this, anyone is an eligible buyer, the good purchased being security for the debt. Neither of these things is true of general store credit. The part of price most emphasized is the small down payment. This may lead the buyer to incur burdensome debts. The household buyer's inexperience and carelessness in making simple calculations lead her to accept the seller's statement that her instalment costs her little or nothing. She very likely pays, however, anywhere from 12 to 50 per cent on the credit that she receives.

No rules can be laid down for the household buyer in this matter. Money income, family needs, temperament of members, and other factors determine what is best. It is clear, however, that the use of credit and instalment buying increases the need for careful budgeting and checking of expenditure, and the systematic filing of bills and receipts.

Among the group of New York farm families whose buying practices were studied, very little instalment credit was used. "They preferred to buy on cash terms. When they had the cash available, they bought the household articles which they wanted; but when the cash was not available, they preferred to go without the commodities rather than mortgage their future income with a debt."[13]

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[13] *Op. cit.*, p. 81.

HOW RECOGNIZE THE GOODS DESIRED

The household buyer's most perplexing problem is that of judging or evaluating the qualities of a good which affect its usefulness, and discovering which good is best in proportion to price.[14] In a fabric for window curtains, for example, the qualities in which she is interested would include color, texture, fastness of color both to sunlight and washing, durability, draping, and style. In a garment she is interested in design, workmanship, size, and fit as well as the qualities of the fabric.

The variety of goods she must purchase makes the task of recognizing quality difficult even if other conditions are ideal. The market, as it is, provides the buyer with few means of recognizing quality; and attempts are made to make goods appear better than they really are. Sometimes misleading statements occur on labels and in advertisements. Cotton may be substituted for wool, and rayon for silk in hosiery. "Solid walnut" may be veneered gumwood or be partly constructed of elm and birch. "Lamb" may be mutton, "choice" sirloin steaks may be cut from common-grade beef.

Even without special devices to help her recognize quality the household buyer can often learn something by inspection. She may look, feel, smell, taste, listen, and in these various ways discover what the good is like. Furthermore, by using goods she can learn from experience. On some goods simple tests may be performed.

Inspection is quite adequate in some cases, for judging the fit of a garment, for example, or the suitability of color, the freshness of vegetables, the texture of dress goods, the design of furniture. There are many things, however, which inspection does not reveal, for example, durability of a fabric, fastness of color, or purity of milk. Inspection by the household buyer will be valueless if she does not possess the knowledge needed to understand the significance of what she sees. She may not be able, for example, to relate the openness of a weave to the durability of cloth. As a small-scale unspecialized buyer she cannot be expected in every case to possess the knowledge of an expert. Furthermore, with the increase in canned and packaged products, inspection frequently is impossible.

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[14] For a thorough discussion of this problem see J. V. Coles, *Standardization of Consumers' Goods* (1932).

Through experience the family may discover a variety of cabbage or oranges or a brand of silk hose which seems to meet their need. The conclusions reached are often erroneous as the qualities of the goods are not tested under controlled conditions. Experience is, moreover, too limited to be of much help except in purchases of such goods as bread, potatoes, silk hose, which are frequently repeated. Even for these, experience extends to only a limited number of the varieties available in the market. If a good is found to be satisfactory it may not be possible to recognize it again. This is true to a large extent of silk stockings at the present time. Trial and error, or learning by experience, may actually be dangerous as is the case in the use of certain patent medicines.

Testing by the household buyer, that is, applying specific analytical tests, may help somewhat. Fabrics, for example, may be tested for fastness of color and for fiber content. The possibility of such testing by the household buyer can easily be exaggerated. Coles writes:

> There are . . . a few of the less complex tests, not requiring special equipment and technique, which may be used by the consumer. The application of these tests would appear theoretically very desirable, yet practically there are many limitations to their use. These limitations are due to the small amount of money to be saved, the amount of time involved in testing, lack of samples for testing, and delay in purchasing occasioned by testing.[15]

The increase in ready-to-wear garments decreases the possibility of tests on fabrics.

Beyond inspection, experience, and testing, the household buyer in evaluating quality may rely on general market aids such as the repute of the dealer, the advice of clerks, or price. Or she may depend on advertisements or trademarks, or utilize standards wherever they are available.

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[15] *Op. cit.*, p. 19.

For some goods the simplest way of getting satisfactory quality is to rely on the dealer; to buy only from dealers guaranteeing "money back if not satisfied." This method is satisfactory, however, only for buyers who need not watch their pennies. It limits one's selection to those stores where the dealer is known and to those having a liberal returned-goods policy. The abuse of the returned-goods privilege by many customers increases the cost of selling. Patrons of the store have to pay for this if the store is to continue in business. In addition, reliance on the dealer provides no means of discovering which of the many goods in the store are best for the price.

Some clerks are able and willing to assist the household buyer. Others wilfully mislead, or are no more expert than the buyer in judging quality. In the study of sheeting made by Cook the clerks who day by day sold sheeting were no more competent in judging durability than were the housewives.[16] At a conference meeting of producers of refrigerators the need of performance standards for judging refrigerators was discussed. Those present recognized that claims of salesmen are often misleading. One reason given was that they know nothing about the actual performance of the refrigerators they sell.[17]

Many household buyers rely on price as a guide to quality. Such reliance is founded on the belief that cost of production determines price, that better quality costs more, consequently it has a higher price. It would be much safer for the household buyer to assume that the seller is interested in getting as much as he can for his good whether quality is superior or inferior, and that, unless she can recognize quality, the price may be high even though quality is very low. Numerous examples could be cited to illustrate the fact that paying a higher price does not ensure higher quality. Cook found that the brand ranking eighth in quality rated second in price. Of two brands of equal quality one sold for two and a half times as much as the other.[18] A high price may be asked in order to appeal to a certain income group.

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[16] *What Price Sheeting,* University of Cincinnati.

[17] Mimeo. News Release of the American Standards Associations, conference on standardization of refrigerators held March 30, 1928.

[18] Vawter Foundation, *Ethics of Advertising,* p. 106.

Some people, for example, consider that they can afford $10 shoes. They look on the $10 as a measure of quality. Anything less would not be considered. Consequently some retailers may have to mark up their prices in order to make sales. Inferior goods are sometimes disposed of in this way.[19]

Advertising has become a very important part of selling. In using advertising the household buyer will do well to remember that sellers employ it for their own advantage, that it is planned to increase their sales and profits. Benefit to buyers is of secondary importance and is more or less incidental to the process of increasing the profits of sellers.

Advertising can be said to serve buyers only if it provides information of value to them. It is made up of all kinds. Some accurate worthwhile information is at times given about the goods available, their composition, methods of using them, their durability, care, price, and where and when they may be purchased. Much of the information provided is, however, vague and incomplete. Moreover, it is often combined with a flood of irrelevant meaningless description, much pseudo-science, and some direct misrepresentation. Many things are omitted that the buyer would like to know. Various appeals are made. Economy, durability, or serviceability may be stressed in advertising a good when even superficial investigation reveals that no saving can be effected by the purchase of this good in contrast with many others available. More frequently an attempt is made to arouse emotions, shame, fear, vanity, emulation, mother love, reverence for success. Playing on the mysterious faith in the printed page, advertisements by slogans, irrelevant facts, and pretty pictures attempt to beguile household buyers. In many cases attention is diverted from essentials to non-essentials. Everything possible is done to prevent rational thinking, to encourage the buyer to accept the seller's judgment in place of investigating for herself.

The extravagant claims of multitudes of advertisers naturally develop a certain immunity in the buyers, and statements come to be discounted rather than accepted. The household buyer would do well to cultivate deliberately a more sceptical attitude, to recognize what is back of all this trade puffing and exaggeration. Other more reliable and unbiased sources of information should be utilized as fully as possible.

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[19] See, for example, Dane Yorke, "Mystery of Retail Price," *American Mercury*, 30 (1933), 388-93.

With the great increase in brands, household buyers have come to rely on them as a guide to quality. One advantage comes from the fact that the buyer knows where to fix the responsibility. The brand owner's name is on the label. The brand tells her nothing, however, about quality; it gives her no means of comparing one good with another to discover which is better in quality or best for the price. To the extent that quality is constant, brands make it possible for the buyer to repeat a satisfactory purchase or to avoid one already found unsatisfactory. Less time need be spent in shopping and inspecting goods. However, brands are not always constant in quality. Moreover, in selling certain goods, clothing for example, brands have been developed to only a limited extent.

Since goods of identical quality appear under different brand names, brands increase the variety from which to choose and thus make choice more difficult. The number of brands of common products indicates better than anything else the confusing array of goods presented to the consumer-buyer. It is estimated that at one time there were on the market 10,000 brands of wheat flour, 4,500 brands of canned corn, 1,000 brands each of canned peaches, salmon, and tea, and 500 brands of mustard. One small drug store reported 56 different brands of hair tonic.[20]

Through advertising an exaggerated notion of the quality of branded goods has been built up. The household buyer may be afraid to buy little-known brands or goods in bulk. The price of these may be lower and the quality identical with or even better than those of the well-known brand. Inability to compare goods costs the household buyer many dollars. A group of nonproprietary drugs was contrasted with the identical products under brand names. The branded drugs sold for $25.30, the unbranded for $6.40.[21] The antiseptic action of $15 worth of Listerine is equal to a cent's worth of carbolic acid.[22]

[20] *Jour. of Commerce,* June 16, 1928.
[21] *J. Am. Med. Assoc.,* 97 (1931, Oct. 24), 1226.
[22] *J. Am. Med. Assoc.,* 84 (1925) 55.

In a few instances, goods are described by standards. For years our weights and measures have been standardized, but standard terms are not used in describing the durability of shoes, the weighting in silk, the tenderness of meat, the performance efficiency of electric refrigerators or even their insulation.

During recent years there has been an increase in standards to aid in market selection. Pure food laws check the sale of food below a certain minimum standard. In milk, grading such as "A" and "B" is sometimes required. Some canned fruits and vegetables are graded, "fancy," "choice," or "standard." The use of cans of standard sizes is being promoted in order to simplify a comparison of quantity. A federal law requires the use of standard baskets and berry boxes in interstate commerce. In some instances goods are manufactured according to Bureau of Standard specifications and labeled accordingly. Terms such as solid walnut furniture, pure silk, part-wool, are being defined and used accordingly.

Standards have just recently been established for describing all-wool and part-wool blankets. No finished blanket with less than 5 per cent wool shall in any way be described woolen. If the blanket has 5 to 25 per cent wool it shall be described as having at least 5 per cent wool. If the blanket has more than 25 per cent wool the minimum content of wool may be stated on the label; if more than 98 per cent wool it may be described as all wool. The value of such description to the consumer is evident.[23]

If goods are described in standard terms the household buyer may more readily discover a satisfactory good. Fictitious variety will disappear. Goods can be compared, and so she is more likely to get the best value for her money. The buyer will be able to judge quality independently; she will not have to rely on repute of the dealer or on brand name or price. The use of standards brings other advantages. Price competition is keener. Chase describes the advantage of standards: "The buyer knows exactly what he is getting; the manufacturer knows exactly what he has to produce. Competition must then descend from the cloudy heights of sales appeals and mysticism generally, to just one factor—price."[24]

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[23] This standard was submitted to manufacturers, distributors, and users, by the Bureau of Standards, U. S. Dept. of Com., June 11, 1932. The Bureau announced that it had been accepted by a satisfactory majority. It was to become effective Dec. 31, 1932. The date was later postponed. *J. H. Ec.,* 25 (1933, March), 224-6.

BETTER BUYING AND SELLING PRACTICES

An efficient purchaser is one who gets the goods best suited to her needs with the least expenditure of time, energy, and money; and, in addition, she does not unnecessarily increase selling costs. Many household buyers would do well to pause and criticize their market practices both from their own point of view and from the standpoint of the seller who is interested in keeping down costs. Let us look first of all at the buyer's responsibility for market costs.

The ideal buyer from the standpoint of the retailer does not claim more of the salesman's time than is really necessary to make a satisfactory purchase. So far as possible she has made up her mind before coming to the market concerning what goods, quantities, sizes, and colors she wants, in what stores she is most likely to find the goods desired, and what price she is willing to pay. By so doing shopping around is reduced and the clerk may be given exact information as to what is wanted. Thus he can more readily assist the buyer. An ideal customer does not use the clerk's time to provide her with interesting recreation when she has no intention of buying, either now or later, nor does she buy if she has no intention of keeping. She is careful in handling goods so they are not damaged in any way, and is courteous to clerks so she gets maximum service and causes least friction with the management. She does not abuse the returned-goods privilege either by using the goods sent out for inspection, or by falsely laying the blame on the store for unsatisfactory quality when her faulty use or care of the good is responsible. Arrangements are always made to receive C.O.D. orders. Charge accounts are promptly paid. She avoids rush hours. Large quantities are bought whenever this is satisfactory to her. This is important since the customary small size of individual retail sales is largely responsible for the high cost of retailing.[25] And finally she does what she can to prevent dishonest practices.

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[24] S. Chase and F. J. Schlink, *Your Money's Worth,* p. 66.

Kelly, president of "The Fair," a large department store in Chicago, points out that if people select only goods they intend to keep and are mindful of the rights of the merchant and the sales people who serve them, the cost of doing business would be lessened considerably and prices lowered accordingly.[26] The Retail Trade Board in Boston in 1924 made a study of the returned goods. The conclusion was that the majority of returns are made because the customer changes her mind or for other reasons not given rather than because of faulty merchandise or service.[27]

Many household buyers are not interested in practices which would reduce retailing costs. The effect of their actions on the price they pay is not immediate. Even in the long run the people who make excessive demands seldom fully pay for them. Other buyers who demand less service and who do not abuse privileges given help to bear part of the increased cost. A deeper sense of social responsibility is, in many cases, needed.

Of greatest personal concern to the household buyer is the reduction of her time, energy, and money costs. From her point of view three lines of improvement are possible: (1) to increase the buyer's skill; (2) make the task less difficult; and (3) give the purchaser more protection so that in case of fraud or misrepresentation she can be compensated for her loss.

Increasing the buyer's skill

To increase her skill the household buyer must criticize her own market habits and see wherein she is wasting time and money. A few simple things may increase efficiency considerably: e.g., fuller use of newspaper advertising; careful reading of labels, including not only the large print but the small print as well; inspecting products to discover shrunken panels on vanilla bottles, false bottoms in strawberry boxes; planning shopping details before leaving home; recording brands found satisfactory; becoming familiar with standards as they are introduced.

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[25] Charles E. Artman, *Expense Factors in City Distribution of Perishables,* U. S. Dept. of Agri., Dept. Bul. 1411 (1926).

[26] *Problems of the Household Buyer,* Proceedings of Conference Univ. of Chicago, Dept. of Home Economics (1927), p. 21.

[27] *Return of Merchandise,* Boston Chamber of Commerce, mimeo., p. 1.

What is perhaps most needed is more knowledge of price difference and of qualities and grades available, the suitability of these for various purposes, and how the various qualities can be recognized. Much selection is based on very incomplete knowledge. The seller's word is too frequently accepted as the truth. One-half of a group of housewives who reported stated that their dealers handled either the best or a very good quality of meat. Lack of knowledge of grades and quality is very evident since only about 9 per cent of the cattle slaughtered were probably of these qualities.[28]

The eye is depended on to too great an extent. Lacking knowledge of more important facts, the household buyer in choosing her equipment pays too much attention to color, surface finish, and minor gadgets and too little attention to points which affect efficient performance. Several years ago the author was being shown around an aluminum factory. When watching a worker polishing a tea kettle, she asked the manager how much the brilliant polish on the kettle cost. He replied that during the war when the price of labor was high the cost per kettle was one dollar. He went on to explain that there was very little sale for unpolished kettles. Yet in comparatively short time the effect of polishing would have almost or entirely disappeared.

A study was made in Michigan of consumer demand for apples. It was found: "Sales depend first upon quality, but even the quality apple is very hard to sell unless it has color, and by color is meant bright red color. . . . Consumers usually think of a green apple as immature or of poor quality."[29] Grimes Golden and Jonathon apples of equal grade were sold side by side at the same price for two months; and 97.6 per cent of the apples sold were the red variety. The more color the apples had the higher the price people were willing to pay.

Prejudice due to superficial knowledge may prevent a person from getting satisfactory goods at a low price. For example, rusty oranges or grapefruit are often passed by even though they may be finer in flavor and cheaper in price than others. Brown eggs are favored in some markets and white in others because of local preference.

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[28] K. B. Gardner, *Consumer Habits and Preferences in the Purchase and Consumption of Meat,* U. S. Dept. of Agri. Dept. Bul. 1443, p. 36.

[29] P. H. Gaston, *Consumer Demand for Apples in Michigan,* Michigan Agri. Exp. Sta., Bul. 209 (1931), p. 23.

Making the task less difficult

Since household buying is unspecialized and is only one of the many tasks for which the housewife is responsible, the possibility of marked improvement in market selection lies to a very large extent in simplifying the market so that the task is less difficult.

The average household buyer looks upon the market as something quite outside her control. She accepts it as it is. She may feel greatly handicapped but she seldom considers that there is anything she can do about it. If her silver is poorly polished or her biscuits are not light she recognizes that improvement is her responsibility; but she is not so aware of her responsibility in improving the market in order that she can more easily secure the goods that she wants.

Important changes which would simplify market selection are (1) less misrepresentation and (2) fuller and more accurate information about prices and the comparative merits of goods. To achieve these things the most important single change needed is the increased use of standards whereby the consumer can judge the qualities of the good she buys and decide whether it will serve an intended purpose and be best in proportion to price. If standards were available less fraud and misrepresentation would occur. Fictitious variety due to brands would partly disappear. Advertising in time would become more informative. Clerks could be more easily trained.

Reference has been made to some of the standards already in use. New standards need to be developed and the use of many of those now developed should be extended. The Copeland bill to revise the Federal Food and Drug Act has many clauses of great importance to the consumer; for example, the prevention of false advertising; the inclusion of cosmetics under regulations applying to foods and drugs; the requirement of informative labels.

Meats, fresh fruits and vegetables, and butter are sold by grade in the wholesale market. In the retail market these grades are seldom mentioned. The garment factory buys silk according to percentage weighting but does not give this information in selling dresses. Grades for canned fruits and vegetables have been established but are little used. New York state has established mandatory grades for eggs. The practice might be extended to other states.

New standards should be developed wherever possible in order that important qualities in goods may be identified and goods compared. The ideal of making it possible for the buyer to get the most for her money may never be achieved, yet standards should make it impossible for a seller under the guise of a high price to palm off a distinctly inferior good as superior.

The increased use of standards would make education for market selection more effective. At the present time a woman may learn that insulation is the most important part of a refrigerator; that weighting in silk greatly affects wearing quality and at the same time gives body which is very deceptive. Equipped with such information she does not find herself a better judge when she goes to the market, for she has no means of knowing how the refrigerators or the silks in the shops rate on these things. A few salesmen perhaps are able to tell her. In place of having to depend on salesmen for information about the temperature a refrigerator will maintain under standard conditions, the ice, gas, or electricity required to maintain the optimum temperature, the storage capacity in cubic feet or shelf area, it would be much better if the important facts were on the label for all to read.

Increased availability of standards depends to a large extent on the household buyer. Their use in the sale of goods is for the most part voluntary. Requests from buyers for goods described by standards will increase their use and stimulate the development and introduction of new standards. The American Home Economics Association, Committee on Standardization of Consumers' Goods, has been attempting, for example, to introduce standards for sheeting and woolen blankets. A part of their program in introducing standards for blankets consists of a "consumer purchasing leaflet" in which the household buyer is urged "to insist on exact information as to the percentage of different fibers in the blanket you buy," "to ask about the tensile strength," about the weight in pounds. The aim of the committee is that the label should provide information concerning size, percentage of wool and cotton, tensile strength of warp and filling, and weight in pounds. The more buyers ask for these facts the more easily will sellers be persuaded that labels should bear this information.

The American Home Economics committee working on standardization of sheeting desired to have the thread count, strength, weight, and amount of filler or loading stated on labels. Manufacturers were greatly concerned about the effect of such information on their brands. Large sums of money had, in many cases, been spent in educating housewives to use the only brand "insuring refreshing sleep," sheets the possession of which would be a "pride and joy," which after long years "would be as good as new." Agnew reports that manufacturers believe that: "Consumers are not now making a significant number of requests for either the specifications or the data which the technical committee proposed should be regularly supplied with sheets, and that at present the only real demand for such information comes from the large distributors who want it for their own use rather than to pass on to the consumer." Furthermore, manufacturers say that they see very little prospect of adequate consumer support in such a proposed movement.[30]

If more standards were established and known to consumers undoubtedly advertising would be more informative. The mere existence of standards does not, however, guarantee their use in advertising. Vaile, for example, "classified the advertisements in the *Saturday Evening Post* for the month of April, 1925, and found that over 50 per cent of the space was devoted to goods for which there were recognized objective tests of quality . . . only three advertisers made reference to standard comparative tests."[31] The use of standard tests and terms in advertising waits upon the buyer's knowledge of them. If people were more accustomed to thinking of goods in exact terms they would be less affected by the vague generalities of much present-day advertising.

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[30] P. G. Agnew, "Technical Standards for the Consumer Goods," *J. H. Ec.*, 23 (1931, Dec.), 1098.

[31] R. S. Vaile, *Economics of Advertising*, p. 10.

Voluntary changes to reduce fraud and misrepresentation are often not enough. At the present time the buyer gets more legal protection in buying foods and drugs than in buying any other commodities although protection within some states is very ineffective. Products falling below a minimum standard are debarred and mixtures must be labeled to state contents. It is felt by many that this practice ought to be extended to other goods, textiles for example. Then silk fabrics would be labeled to show the percentage of weighting or of cotton, rayon, or wool. All so-called woolen fabrics would be labeled to show the percentage of wool. At present, sellers are not required to give important facts; but what they do say about their goods is supposed to be true. Where standards are developed a certain minimum description might be required; for example, facts about the strength of batteries for one's radio, the wood used in household furniture, the fur in coats displayed for sale. This minimum description required should be clearly stated on the label, not tucked away in the corner of the label in small print or mixed in with irrelevant facts so that the significance is lost.

As with the use of voluntary standards, the passage and enforcement of laws to protect the consumer depend to some extent on how interested she is. The influence of each individual is limited, but an awareness of need and a desire for change from the group find expression through the markets and through organizations composed of homemakers or of those who turn to homemakers to secure support for measures being advocated.

The recent attacks on the Federal Pure Food and Drug Act indicate the need for continued vigilance and interest on the part of consumers. A regulation passed in December, 1930, permitted the use of refined corn sugar in packing or processing any article of food in which sugar is a recognized element. In this way the manufacturer is allowed still further to exploit consumer ignorance and pass off corn sugar, which is glucose, for cane and beet sugar, which are sucrose. Another even more serious change in interpretation of the Pure Food and Drug Act has occurred with a recent interpretation given by the United States Supreme Court. A product was considered misbranded, that is, as giving false and misleading information on the label, only if the label was false and misleading with respect to the product's ingredients or composition. The Act, the Court has held, did not apply to statements on the label concerning curative claims.

Consumers in general need to bestir themselves, to awaken to the fact that in place of being the most important group, the one whose interests should be paramount, they are often considered the legitimate prey of profit-making interests. We need a campaign to inform the household buyer how she is cheated right and left.

Protection for the consumer in case of fraud[32]

Caveat emptor, which is "Let the buyer beware," describes pretty accurately the position of the household buyer in purchasing a good for which no legal standards are enforced. She must judge for herself whether a good is as represented. If she makes a mistake she has little recourse in the courts.

Under common law the buyer has a case of action against the seller if a warranty, express or implied, was a part of the sale contract. If the seller makes a statement, oral or written, in advertisement, letter, or catalogue, in an effort to induce a customer to buy, an express warranty has been given. If the buyer relies on this statement, and the goods are different in quality from what he was led to expect, then he has a case for action against the seller. The seller is responsible only for statements of fact. If he has told the buyer that his electric refrigerators are the finest in the market he has no responsibility. Such a statement is "trade puffing." The court holds that no sensible person believes such statements.

The express warranty holds only between the buyer and the seller from whom he bought. The manufacturer can make false statements on labels. He sells to the retailer. The retailer sells these goods with the false labels to his customers. He does not make the false statements. Under express warranty he is not liable.

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[32] See H. Kyrk, *Economic Problems of the Family,* pp. 462-8.

An implied warranty places more responsibility in the seller. "If . . . the buyer orders goods for an indicated purpose, it is the seller's responsibility to furnish those reasonably adapted to the purpose."[33]

In theory the buyer has some protection if warranties are given; in practice, however, this protection is negligible. He is ignorant of the law, and the money loss is usually too small for him to risk more on legal proceedings. The greatest protection to the household buyer comes from regulations maintaining "fair competition." The enforcement of "fair competition" is the special function of the Federal Trade Commission which was established in 1915.

Practices considered unfair from the point of view of another seller and consequently forbidden are, for example: the use of false and misleading advertising calculated to mislead and deceive the purchasing public, to the injury of competitors; false and disparaging statements respecting competitors' goods; passing off goods for well-known products of competitors through the use of trade names, labels, etc.; selling rebuilt, second-hand, or old products for new.

The Federal Trade Commission takes action only against trade practices which injure "unfairly" some competitor. If the buyer alone is injured no action can be taken, e.g., if all competitors make false claims no action can be taken. The perusal of any one of the annual reports of the Commission reveals, however, many cases where the consumer was benefited by the ruling. Orders "to cease and desist" certain practices during the year ending June, 1932, included, for example, the representation of ready-made clothing as tailor-made, of radioactive water as harmless, of machine-made blankets as Indian. Lotteries and misbranding were checked. A company was ordered to discontinue the use of the word "Textileather" as a trade name without a readily discernible statement to the effect that the product was not leather.

Since May, 1929, a special board has been investigating false and misleading advertising. For the year ending June, 1932, 406 cases were investigated and reported to the Federal Trade Commission.[34] The influence of such a board extends far beyond the actual cases investigated and reported.

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[33] *Ibid.*, p. 464.

ORGANIZATIONS WHICH PROMOTE GREATER EFFICIENCY IN MARKET SELECTION

Mention has already been made of certain organizations which promote greater efficiency in market selection, for example, the Federal Trade Commission. We want now to look especially at organizations other than those established by the government to enforce regulations.

Organizations promoting increased efficiency of market selection either through the improvement of selling methods or education of buyers are sponsored by several groups: (1) those having goods or services to sell; (2) professional groups such as the American Medical Association, and the American Home Economics Association, whose interest in market selection is only one of many interests; (3) educational institutions concerned with increasing the skill of household buyers; (4) government bureaus or institutions which carry on research and education to change selling methods and increase buyers' skill; and (5) those whose primary purpose it is to aid buyers in choosing goods wisely. For the household buyer Consumers' Research is the only organization of importance in the last group.

Manufacturers and retailers interested in high quality promote the introduction of standards so that quality may be recognized. They attempt to reduce fraud and misrepresentation. They recognize that ignorance of buyers makes it possible for inferior goods to capture the market of superior goods, and that high quality may be driven off the market if it cannot be distinguished from poor. The buyer unable to get satisfactory quality is likely to reduce her purchases and turn to other types of goods. The purchase of inferior silk, for example, when the buyer thought she was getting a superior quality may lead the consumer to turn to cotton, wool, or rayon.

Because the interests of sellers are to some extent bound up

[34] Federal Trade Commission, *Annual Report,* Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1932.

with those of consumers, manufacturers and retailers are promoting changes which will simplify the problems of the household buyer. Much of this work is carried on through trade associations. The National Canners' Association, for example, has set up standards for size of containers and standard terms for describing canned fruits and vegetables. The American Gas Association testing laboratories ensure that all appliances bearing their seal pass minimum safety specifications. The National Silk Association is interested in developing standards for describing silk weighting. Many trade associations have formulated codes of ethics in an effort to reduce unfair methods of selling, which often confuse the household buyer and make selection of goods more difficult.

Better Business Bureaus, which operate in many large cities, aim among other things to promote higher ethical standards in advertising and suppress unfair, untruthful, dishonest advertising and business practices. They are supported by the business men of the city in which they operate. A bureau checks local advertising and investigates to see if the products offered for sale are as stated. Here is an advertisement, "Guaranteed first quality silk hose, at two pairs for $1.10." Investigation reveals them to be 90 per cent rayon. Other follow-ups on advertisements reveal Chinese dog masquerading as silver fox, seconds being passed off as firsts, excessive guarantees being made which would never be fulfilled, reconditioned furniture being sold for new. Campaigns against short selling in coal are frequently waged. Undesirable practices are often checked by pointing out to the seller the folly of his ways and getting him to agree to desist. If this is not effective, publicity is given to questionable advertising. Prosecution under truth-in-advertising laws may be resorted to.[35]

Some advertising agencies attempt to prevent fraudulent advertising. Good Housekeeping Institute, for example, passes on all products advertised in *Good Housekeeping.* The major requirement is that the product live up to its claims. Much trade puffing, however, passes for truth. "Vapex" was endorsed when it claimed, "Relief from colds instantaneous with Vapex." The *American Medical Association Journal* says that "Vapex" is for all intents and purposes an expensive substitute for the old-time menthol inhaler, and it is not likely that its effectiveness in the cure of nasal infections or relief from hay fever would be any greater than that of ordinary menthol.[36] Even where the advertising is strictly truthful the Good Housekeeping seal does not help one to judge which of the great many products accepted are best in quality or best for the price.

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[35] Truth-in-advertising laws have been passed in 38 states. In 24 of these the law itself is very satisfactory but in no case has special machinery been set up by the state to enforce it.

The American Standards Association, a federation of many trade associations, government bodies, and professional groups, has been organized to carry on research in developing standards and to provide means for getting standards adopted voluntarily. The American Home Economics Association has been an active member. So far the work of the American Standards Association has had, however, little application to consumers' goods, although its work is very suggestive of what might be done.

Recently the American Medical Association undertook to pass on the advertisements of certain foods and drugs. Exaggeration will probably be reduced somewhat but this action is not going to ensure the buyer's being provided with the information needed to make a wise selection. The American Medical Association has done a very great deal to expose "quack" remedies.

Government bureaus carry on research and education in an effort to improve marketing. The United States Department of Agriculture, for example, has developed and promoted the use of standards for meat, butter, eggs, fresh fruits, and vegetables. The use of these standards in most states is voluntary, and they are widely used in wholesale markets. This use has reduced marketing costs and has made for more orderly marketing.

The Bureau of Home Economics has for years been studying certain textiles and refrigerators and standards which might be used in describing them. They have co-operated with other groups in the Department of Agriculture and other organizations in the standardization and simplification of consumers' goods. Some educational work has been carried on.

[36] *J. Am. Med. Assn.,* Vol. 97 (1931, July 18), 197.

The early studies in simplification and standardization of manufactured goods were conducted by the Bureau of Standards, and it is still doing important work. This bureau is responsible for setting up standards or specifications for all commodities purchased by the federal government, such as those for wax, blankets, paper, ink, and typewriters. In purchasing goods for government use, extensive research has been carried on so that there is now in the files of the Bureau of Standards much information of value to all buyers. But this information is not available to the general public. Manufacturers are at liberty to make goods according to Bureau of Standards' specifications which are based on the research; and the Bureau of Standards compiles a list of those manufacturers "willing-to-certify." These manufacturers are permitted to use labels which will signify that their goods are equal to or better than government specifications. The Bureau of Standards does not, however, inspect the goods. To date these specifications have been used to only a very limited extent.

There are those who feel that government bureaus aid specialized interests more than consumers in general:

> The Bureau of Mines has analyzed 115,000 samples of coal to determine the heat-producing qualities and ash content of coal from different mines and districts, but of course this information has not been issued in terms of relative price and quality, and sources of supply to help ultimate consumers purchase their winter coal supplies. City and state governments are able to obtain the information for use in public purchases, but *not* for the use of their citizens.[37]

Extensive research is often carried on to provide industries with special information. Schlink points out: "There is no help for the consuming public on radio sets, or gasoline, or automobile oil, or writing paper, or living-room rugs corresponding to the costly and extensive work done by the government for manufacturers on exactly the same aspects of the same subjects."[38] He further comments on the fact that the Bureau of Mines failed to consider the interests of society when it gave commercial methanol or synthetic wood alcohol a clean bill of health. The *Journal* of the American Medical Association points out the hazard to autoists in the use of methanol.

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[37] Consumers' Research, *General Bulletin,* 2.50, Non-confidential (1932, Sept.), p. 9.

[38] "Government Bureaus for Private Profit," *Nation,* 133 (1931, Nov. 11), 509.

Certain things at present point to new policies in the government with respect to the consumer. The National Recovery Administration includes a Consumers' Advisory Board as well as one from industry and labor. Its influence to date would lead one to suspect that the consumer is considered more in theory than in practice. Trade agreements restricting production and maintaining price are on the whole detrimental to the consumer. Suggestions have recently been made for the organization of consumers' county councils throughout the whole country which would be truly representative of consumers' interests. "The primary purpose of these would be to receive complaints about price increases and to disseminate information to consumers."[39] A Consumers' Counsel has been established as part of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. Every code and marketing agreement that comes under the jurisdiction of the agricultural administration has to be passed on by this group.

In the realm of consumer education the recent attempt of the consumers' counsel in co-operation with the bureaus of Agricultural Economics, Home Economics, and Labor Statistics is of interest. A biweekly bulletin has been published to aid consumers (1) in understanding changes in prices and costs of food and farm commodities, and (2) to aid them in making wise, economical purchases. This bulletin is sent on request. In it are discussed such topics as "Who gets those high prices?", "City, retail, and farm prices." Facts regarding price change are given and a great deal of emphasis placed on the consumer's point of view. One wonders if such things as these are not indicative of developments of great import to the consumer.

Consumers' Research is of special interest to the household buyer because of the pioneering it has done in an effort to make available to her those facts which would help her in wise selection. It was organized in 1927 for the purpose of providing unbiased information and counsel on goods bought by the "ultimate consumer," and it attempts to answer such questions as the following: What make of vacuum cleaner, out of seven tested, removed the highest percentage of dirt? What kind of gasoline injures the valves of your car? Is Absorbine, Jr., to be recommended for athlete's foot, Listerine for dandruff, or Vapex for a cold? Information from the most reliable sources is assembled, and periodic bulletins are published. Where standardized tests have been established, branded products are rated on the basis of these. Both quality and probable economy or value for the dollar are considered. Information about bulk goods to replace brands is given. Formulae are given for making such things as floor wax and silver polish at home. Advertising is debunked; exaggerations and misleading personal endorsements are exposed. To date relatively little research has been carried on by the organization itself. Some beginnings in this have, however, been made.[40]

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[39] *New Republic,* LXXVII (1933, Nov. 20), 57.

Consumers' Research is the only organization which deliberately sets out to reveal the way consumers are exploited in our present system. It has grown rapidly. When last reported the membership had reached 60,000. Although this is a relatively small group the organization has a very wholesome influence on selling methods in general. Sellers are coming to realize that here at least are trained specialists able to expose pseudo-scientific advertisements, to point out to buyers the extent to which they are being overcharged for fictitious values passing under brand names, and to interpret technical tests which to date have been used only by large-scale trained buyers.

In many cases research work in colleges and universities is reaching the public through Consumers' Research. Both endowed and state-supported institutions find it difficult at times directly to release findings which would interfere with the profits of some corporation. These facts can be published through the one organization whose main business is to enlighten consumers in every way possible in regard to sales practices. In this and in many other ways the bulletins of Consumers' Research are a boon to those interested in increasing the efficiency of buyers in the retail market.

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[40] Consumers' Research Inc., Washington, N. J.

CHAPTER XVIII

CHANGES IN HOUSEHOLD PROBLEMS

MANAGEMENT BECOMES MORE DIFFICULT

Two sets of forces are at work, those making household problems more complex and those bringing simplification. It should be recognized at the outset that a change of any sort in itself makes management more difficult. Old customs and habits become obsolete; and the manager must acquire new knowledge, re-evaluate present practices, change old habits, and develop new skills.

Many are the changes at present occurring. In the first place individual households are less independent than formerly and they are becoming even more bound up with the economic system as a whole. As a result the household manager's problems are not so completely centered in her own household; nor can she independently cope with many of the difficulties she encounters. Co-operative action with other households is needed.

Furthermore, customary ways of living are being modified. New goods are being introduced and, with greater variety of goods to be considered, choice becomes more difficult. Unfamiliar goods must be evaluated and selected. New technique may have to be learned for the final preparation and care of new goods in the home. Increased knowledge and skill are needed when the tub, washboard, and broom give way to the electric washing machine and vacuum cleaner. Increasing scientific knowledge calls for alertness and continued endeavor if the best possible scale of living is to be attained. A comfortable reliance on habit and custom must be replaced by a willingness to study and experiment. As commercial production becomes more efficient, former decisions concerning what to make and what to buy must be remade. Tasks move out of the home, need for money income becomes greater, and more homemakers are faced with the problem of gainful work and of modifying household schedules and the social life of the family.

Growing individualism, the spread of democratic rather than authoritative control in the family, complicates management problems in many homes. Securing co-operation in the performance of household tasks and reaching decisions concerning income apportionment have become more difficult because of this.

Manufacturing processes such as bread making and garment construction have left the home. These called for manipulative skill which once acquired became a habit. Choice-making and marketing, which have increased greatly in importance, do not permit the same reliance on habit. Management has become relatively more important as manipulative tasks such as these have left the home.

MANAGEMENT BECOMES LESS DIFFICULT

Management is difficult in a period of change because former habits and customs are no longer adequate. But in time, adjustments are made. New customs are built up. Problems and friction due to change disappear, and management is thereby simplified. In a money economy where family livelihood is largely dependent on earning and spending a money income, systematic income apportionment is needed. Some family difficulties may disappear if and when budgets and accounts are customary methods of securing returns from money income. At present household practice seems to lag behind need. The family council may be the only effective way of dealing with growing individualism and democracy in family circles. If the family council were customary, an established family pattern, a recognized and accepted way of meeting family problems, management would, in many cases, be much simplified.

New goods must be chosen and new tasks performed. Old customs are no longer satisfactory. But with these changes has come a flood of scientific knowledge and expert advice. Market selection has increased in complexity, but at present, as never before, the need for aiding the household buyer is being recognized so that even the most pessimistic person feels that some reduction in its difficulty may be expected.

With the increase in prepared foods and ready-made clothing, overwork becomes a less serious problem, and the difficulty of combining homemaking and gainful work decreases. The passing of tasks reduces variety somewhat. The worker no longer needs to be skilled in so many. With more and better tools available, higher quality is more easily achieved and the problem of releasing time and energy solved. Devices such as the modern dress pattern have done, in garment construction, what standardized recipes and temperature charts have done in the preparation of food. No longer does the household manager have that part of the planning to do; here are ready-made plans which will greatly assist her in turning out the product desired.

Increase in money income will simplify problems. Only as this occurs can the commercial laundry or the electric washing machine replace the primitive washboard, or the modern pattern make possible higher quality in homemade garments. Higher money income is necessary in some families if the homemaker is to have time to acquire the knowledge necessary for higher standards of efficiency.

EDUCATION IN HOUSEHOLD PROBLEMS

Efficiency in the household is dependent first and foremost on good judgment in decision-making. Skill in performance takes a second place; and it continues to decline in importance as more manipulative tasks leave the home.

Efficiency in household production depends, however, on more than judgment and skill pertaining to specific tasks such as cooking, sewing, cleaning, and child care. The manager must first of all see the relation of household tasks and their performance to family welfare, including the personality development of individuals and the social life of the family as a whole. Secondly she must understand personnel management in order to get assistance in household tasks where needed. Finally she must be prepared to co-operate with others in promoting a more efficient market system and an educational program more in line with present household production needs.

Educational programs tend to lag behind changed needs. Too much attention continues to be given to skills in specific tasks such as cooking, sewing, and cleaning; and too little is given to choice-making, marketing, child development, the organization of the household in order that it contribute fully to social life and personal development of individual members. In home educational programs very little attention has been given to combining household tasks with gainful work. A full-time homemaker has too often been taken for granted. In deciding as to full-time household work for the woman versus some gainful work, many families need help. It may be necessary, for example, to re-evaluate certain customary standards of table service, house furnishings, and clothing in order to discover whether more time can be released. The process of re-evaluation should be one of helping families to see the relation of household production to life as a whole. A greater knowledge of our heritage from the past, of the problems facing many families, and the ways in which individual households are working out satisfactory solutions will aid many households in solving their problems. It will aid in breaking down custom and tradition, and in adjusting the rôle of the household to its changed and still changing socio-economic environment.

Another lag occurs in education for household production. To too great an extent it has been confined to women and girls; men and boys have been too frequently overlooked. The major responsibility in decision-making and performance will probably continue to fall on women. Such division of labor is based on a sound economic principle. Nevertheless, efficiency in household production is retarded unless certain basic homemaking education is extended to men. In many families women are handicapped because of lack of their husbands' co-operation. This happens frequently in child care and attempts to improve nutritional standards. It is not necessary that men be taught to cook and sew, although such instruction might be useful. What is needed is basic education in choice-making as it pertains to uses of money income and family labor. Highly specialized knowledge is not needed so much as an appreciation (1) that for wise choice special knowledge is needed; and (2) that changes are occurring which make certain customs and traditions obsolete.

Homemaking education comes from many sources. Home economics institutions, including schools, colleges, universities, and government bureaus, help prepare homemakers for all types of household problems. In addition, health associations through clinics, visiting nurses, lectures, pamphlets, and other means, provide information regarding health in general, nutrition, sanitation, and child care. Some worthwhile education is, at times, a part of a sales promotion program. For example, those with stoves to sell are interested in more efficient methods of food preparation, the insurance company is interested in health education in order to prolong the life of its policy-holders, and the electric power companies in lighting which will minimize eye strain.

An educational program to promote more efficient household management has two aspects: (1) teaching people to secure the things already wanted with a minimum of money, time, and human effort; and (2) helping them to discover other goods and uses of leisure which will contribute to a richer life.

Formal education in these things is needed more than ever before. In the first place less training is given within the home. Previously the daughter learned from her mother the skills and techniques required; and she looked forward to carrying on production in much the same way as her mother had done. Furthermore, in the earlier period conditions were more static. The skills, techniques, and methods used by the mother were satisfactory for her daughter. But times are changing. Mother's methods are not now entirely adequate. The past throws little light, for instance, on the problem of choosing goods in a modern market. In such traditional tasks as child care and food planning, for example, custom and tradition must stand aside for scientific knowledge. Thus the household has come to be dependent on educational institutions for the most up-to-date information regarding methods of work. Moreover, new goods are being introduced, and increased productive power represents new possibilities of choice.

Many are the difficulties which beset such an educational program. In the first place the group to be reached is very large. The census bureau reports for 1930 over 28,000,000 homemakers. Some of these have very little free time; others have very divided interests. Most women carry on gainful work at some time during their lives. While in school they are often more interested in training for "a job" than for homemaking. Many continue gainful work after marriage. In 1930, over 4,000,000 had gainful work as their main occupation or main source of money income. All women in their household work perform a great variety of tasks and are thus able to give relatively little time and thought to achieving a high standard of excellence in any one. Moreover, for many women a saving of time and energy may not seem important, first, because of plenty of free time, and second, because change of method may bring little absolute gain even though the performance time in any single task be cut in half. Competition is absent, and therefore women are not forced in this way to improve their methods. The manager and worker are one, so habit and inertia are particularly strong.

Progress in things calling for group action, e.g., laws regulating market practices, comes very slowly. In the past they have been less necessary. Group consciousness of need has to be developed and effective organizations gradually established. People must come to see that our economic system as a whole functions properly only when it serves the consumer. At present too many bad practices are allowed to continue because they contribute to the profit of a limited group.

Education for improvement in the technique of securing the thing desired seems, on the whole, a good deal simpler than education for wiser choice of goods. With our rapidly expanding powers of production the great challenge to educators lies right here. In discussing education to promote wiser choosing of goods Kyrk says:

> It will include the giving of all that science knows in regard to human needs and the means of meeting them. It will include the cultivation of the interests, tastes, skills and aptitudes necessary for creative and pleasurable aesthetic expe-

> rience. It will promote understanding of the character of our choices, of the forces that are influencing them, the values that are behind them. Above all, indirectly if not directly, it will endeavor to increase discrimination, self-reliance and independence of judgment on the part of consumers. The consumer must learn to consult his individual need, to form his own judgments, to desire for himself and to respect in others a creative, experimental attitude toward the various means that are offered him for the enhancement of his health and comfort, or the enrichment of his experience.[1]

RESEARCH IN HOUSEHOLD PROBLEMS

Research in household problems should go hand in hand with education. A program for research may to some extent follow along commodity lines, e.g., food, clothing, housing, equipment, and, in addition, goods for recreation, education, and other needs. With each of these, consideration should be given, however, to all questions of importance to the family: What is really best for maximum welfare and development? How recognize the good wanted and get the most for money expended? How make market selection less difficult? What is the best method for performing the various tasks such as cooking, sewing, and cleaning? Research should also include an analysis of household tasks in relation to family life and the position of woman. Combinations of gainful work and household tasks might well at the present time be made the subject of serious study.

Research in diverse fields bears on household problems. Most of the needed research will be carried on by universities, research foundations, and government bureaus. Schools of home economics should play an important part not only in independent research but also in co-ordinating much of the research carried on by other agencies and interpreting its significance to the homemaker. Attention by this group should be focused directly on home problems. As attention centers more on consumption, business enterprise will doubtless expand its research program concerning home problems. The usefulness of this research will always be handicapped by the fact that the interest of buyers and sellers is to some extent opposed. Further research in industrial management will probably continue to throw light on certain technical household problems. The Institute of Industrial Psychology recently extended its field to a study of methods of reducing household fatigue, recognizing that industrial fatigue is partly the result of undesirable home conditions. At the International Congress of Scientific Management in 1930 a resolution was passed to organize a section on household efficiency. Much more thought needs to be given to many household problems.

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[1] *Economic Problems of the Family,* p. 396.

PART V

SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION

CHAPTER XIX

HOW HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION AFFECTS THE STATUS OF WOMEN

From time immemorial women have been the principal household workers. In spite of the fact that household tasks have declined, and the majority of unmarried and some married women are engaged in specialized gainful occupations, the position of every woman is influenced by the status of household production. In early childhood sex discrimination, in toys and type of activity encouraged, is based on the fact that girls are likely to be housekeepers so should play with dolls and learn to be sweet and attractive. It is thus that their livelihood is assured. Thoroughness of education is not deemed so necessary for girls as for boys; and girls tend to enter gainful occupations where the period of training is short. Women in gainful work everywhere find themselves handicapped in certain respects by the general attitude concerning the ability of women and their probable permanence in an occupation.

Housekeeping women are of course most affected by the status of household production. Every woman's economic and social status, and, in addition, her development and satisfaction depend to some extent upon the kind of work she does. So it is interesting to ask whether women with homemaking as an occupation are better or worse off than those engaged in gainful work.

Unbiased discussion of this subject is extremely rare. Some people accept homemaking as the woman's customary rôle. Whether it is good or bad for her is not questioned. In discussing her position they devote themselves to telling her how she should feel or what she should do. It is sometimes recognized that there are discontented housewives. This discontent is laid, however, to a perverse nature. In some cases the lot of the housewife is painted in glowing colors. Its advantages are emphasized;

and no mention is made of the undesirable aspects of the job, or else they are glossed over as of little importance. At the other extreme are those who feel that the customary rôle of the housewife handicaps the woman at every turn: because of it she is being deprived of the possibility of a full and rich life.

Between these two extremes probably lies the truth; but objective impartial study is extremely difficult. To appraise household production as a whole one must walk with wary step. The pitfall of confining one's attention to a limited group and looking upon it as representative must be avoided. Too great attention must not be given to the discontented group which, being most articulate, is most conspicuous. It is well as far as possible to cast aside all preconceptions, and to enter the lists with no point to prove. One should be willing to examine carefully even the most extreme positions taken by others.

THE HEALTH OF HOMEKEEPING WOMEN

No study has yet been made of the effect of household production on the health of workers. Household production in some ways promotes a high standard of health. The average hours of work in the majority of cases are not unduly long. In some instances the working day is longer than that in industry, but even so the injury to health may be much less. Household tasks, since they are performed at home, are frequently broken by incidents of a recreational nature. The worker is her own taskmaster, and can plan rest periods at desired intervals. The tasks have been undertaken to meet the needs of the worker and her family. This often provides a mental stimulus which reduces the possible harmful effects of a long working day. The physical activity involved in certain household tasks may have a beneficial effect on the health. The heavy physical labor most likely to have a detrimental effect on health is being greatly reduced by the introduction of labor-saving machines.

But harmful effects to health occur in many cases. It is true that labor-saving devices exist for practically all arduous household tasks, but there are many homes in which they are not in use, where tasks are performed in a very primitive fashion, where human not mechanical energy is the power. The expenditure of energy does not necessarily have a harmful effect on the health. One occasionally finds a woman who, because of the physical activity it affords, prefers a broom to a vacuum cleaner for the cleaning of her rugs. For most women, however, better health would probably result from an increased use of labor-savers for such tasks as washing and rug-cleaning. Benefits may be derived from reduced exertion and partly also from the change in mental attitude of the worker. The status of the task being elevated, the worker is less discontented.

Most homes do not have a full assortment of modern labor-savers. Yet it must be recognized that the gainful work to which many women turn affords no release from physical strain. A change may be made from the varied work of the household involving at times rather strenuous labor to office work or machine tending. Here the physical labor consists of standing or sitting at attention and performing some minor operation. Such physical inactivity is not conducive to good health.

The continuous character of household tasks, especially during certain periods of family history, causes, in some cases, greater injury to the health of the worker than long hours of active labor. Even though she may not be on active duty, evidence of her labor is about her; she is continually on call. Much so-called leisure has a "string attached." In a study of the time spent in the care of 24 infants, one year and under, it was found that the mother averaged 41 minutes per day away from the baby and thus entirely freed from the responsibility of his care.[1] For some groups of women the nursery school is a real boon. It relieves them of entire responsibility for at least a few hours out of every twenty-four.

Even where there are no small children in the family the work is fairly continuous; meals come three times a day. Many women find it difficult to plan a full day off. Vacations for housewives, when they are entirely freed from the demands of their jobs, are seldom provided. Minor illnesses of the worker are also overlooked because daily needs of the family must be met, and work tends to accumulate if the regular tasks are not performed. Even during a major illness many homemakers are not entirely released from the responsibility of household management.

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[1] L. C. Brossard, *A Study of the Time Spent in the Care of Infants One Year of Age and Under,* Unpublished thesis, Univ. of Chicago (1930), p. 56.

The worker's health may also be affected by her failure to find satisfaction in her work because of the character of the tasks, her isolation, or her status as an unpaid worker. Laird in speaking of fatigue says: "The most treacherous and insidious source is poor emotional adjustment of the individual. One who is of necessity engaged in work which he does not like, or for which he is otherwise poorly adapted, is especially likely to experience a vague but pernicious fatigue."[2] Myerson believes: "The neurosis of the housewife has a large part of its origin in the increasing desires of women, in their demands for a fuller, more varied life than that afforded by the lot of the housewife."[3]

Collier in her study *Marriage and Careers*, which included only professional women, reports that gainful employment in some cases resulted in improved health since an incentive existed for the best possible care of health. Hughes in her study of mothers in industry found that 44 per cent of the working women reported an illness during the past year. A study of 734 households, representative of the same group, was made by the Philadelphia health insurance commission. It was discovered that in 63 per cent of the homes the housekeeper had been ill during the past year. Hughes concludes: "Either the wage-earning mothers have failed to report all their illnesses or they are physically stronger than the woman who stays at home. It is possible that women with greater resistance work in industry. . . . It is also likely that they have less time to think about their health."[4]

THE PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OF HOMEKEEPING WOMEN

Under ideal conditions not only should the health of the worker be maintained, but the activities performed should provide a medium for developing her ability and personality. Household production in this respect offers certain advantages over many gainful occupations. The woman is free to exercise her initiative and independent judgment, and to experiment and seek out the best conditions of work. In addition, household production is unspecialized. New and varied problems are continually being presented. To be well performed, no job demands wider knowledge, more varied skills, more initiative and self-control, or a deeper understanding of human nature and social relationships. If one has these qualities they will aid in meeting many household problems.

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[2] "Work and Fatigue," *Scientific American*, 143 (1930, Aug.), 124.

[3] *The Nervous Housewife*, p. 75.

[4] *Mothers in Industry*, p. 226.

Not being restricted to one very simplified process which she repeats unceasingly, the worker is able to find means of developing to some extent a number of talents. The position of the household worker in this respect stands out in marked contrast to that of many industrial and other specialized workers. Their specialization, although it brings a higher degree of efficiency in the performance of a given task, is so limited in its scope that it contributes little to their development. Minute specialization, common at the present time, robs production of much of its educational value. In many manufacturing, clerical, and other jobs, the worker after a few weeks has mastered the technique and has little more to learn; and as business enterprises have increased in size the possibility of promotion to a more responsible position has lessened.

Professional specialization does not hold the same disadvantages for the worker as industrial specialization. Some household tasks hold as much possibility for developing the worker's ability as do professions but this is seldom achieved; one reason being that much of the worker's time goes to routine tasks.

It is argued by some that household production has certain beneficial effects upon the worker because of the desirable personality traits which it stimulates. Household production is noncompetitive; the woman has greater economic security than most gainfully employed workers. Tead says, in regard to industrial workers: "Among the reasons for . . . self-repression of individuality is the fear of being cut off from a job and the sources of livelihood."[5] We might, accordingly, expect that the greater economic security of the household worker would permit a fuller and freer development of personality. Is this true? Or are there other factors in the household situation working against it? The household worker is apt to be affected by the fact that her tasks are carried on in direct response to human needs, for the purpose of increasing human welfare, comfort, and satisfaction. Infants and little children are cared for, and personal service is rendered to the other members of the family. Are such traits as the greater thoughtfulness for others, the unselfishness and gentleness, which are by many attributed to women as a group, due in any measure to the character of their customary tasks?

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[5] *Instincts in Industry,* p. 97.

Probably everyone can select from his acquaintance women whose personal development has been promoted by having homemaking as their main or only occupation. Other women have been definitely handicapped. With reference to women in general, Thomas says: "I do not contend that women should go into the occupations so much because the occupations need them, though that also is true, as because of the need women have for the occupations."[6] A general statement such as this may call forth objections from many because of the many exceptions which could be cited, but it challenges the attention because it is true at least for a very large group.

The development of the worker is handicapped in a number of ways both by the tasks performed and by her status. Routine tasks, which claim such a large proportion of her time, contribute little to her development. No advancement is possible. As the money income of the family increases, the less desirable tasks may be delegated; but this change does not bring a wider scope for one's activities in household production, although it does at least allow the woman to concentrate on, and perhaps bring to a higher state of perfection, those which give her the greatest satisfaction. These may also be the ones which contribute most to her development.

The security of the woman's position as a non-competitive worker may limit her development. The housewife does not always look upon her job as one in which she must become competent; and she is not subject to the same discipline as many gainful workers who must conform to the standards set by others. She may thereby miss some invigorating stimulation which, though it adds somewhat to the strain of life, spurs on the worker to a fuller realization of her capabilities. Pruette, describing the effect of household production on the worker, says: "Presently she will be a flabby, soft creature of middle-age, with no sustained habits of labor and a triumphant incapacity to think straight about any subject. . . . She will have lost, probably, that discontent that was hers while she still heard echoes from the real world, she will have achieved the complacency of the successful parasite who has learned to idealize her position."[7] We have no means of knowing the extent to which this actually occurs, although Pruette is of the opinion: "It is only the rare woman who can pass without deterioration through many years of uninterrupted domesticity."[8] She urges part-time jobs for the women in order to overcome this unfavorable effect of full-time household production.

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[6] "Women and the Occupations," A. B. Wolfe, *Readings in Social Problems*, p. 506. See also Olive Schreiner, *Woman and Labor.*

Other undesirable personality traits are undoubtedly stimulated by the present status of household production. It is a common belief with many that women tend to be narrowly personal, whereas men more readily achieve an objective point of view. Might this not be the effect of the woman's rather limited contact with people apart from those with whom she has close personal relations? There may be a greater tendency too for the homemaker whose production interests are confined to her own family to see society mainly in terms of her own family. Thomas says: "At present the strain on women even in the well-to-do families is intolerable. Their isolation, the triviality of their interests, and their dependence on the will of another make them nervous and intensely personal."[9]

Bosanquet says that men complain, and with justice, of the woman's narrow-mindedness, "her lack of intelligent interests, her uncertain temper, her frivolity. These all make her a most trying partner to live with." And she adds: "But the strange thing is that they have so seldom recognized that the remedy is not in complaint, but in admitting her to wider interests and a more invigorating mental life."[10]

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[7] "The Married Woman and the Part-Time Job," *Annals*, CXLIII (1929), 303.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 302.

[9] "Women and the Occupations," See A. B. Wolfe, *Readings in Social Problems*, p. 507.

Economic dependence, the limited rights of the household worker over the money income and the accumulated wealth of the family, and the non-honorific character of her work may have certain subtle effects on her personality. The first two of these probably constitute an important force tending to bring about a real or simulated dependence of the wife on her husband: a deference to his judgment and wishes may occur which may not represent the most wholesome relation between two adults. Altogether, economic dependence and the non-honorific character of the woman's work tend to breed not only a sense of inferiority and lack of self-esteem in regard to her capabilities but a real inferiority and a lack of ability. This may occur even though there is nothing inherent in the worker or the character of the tasks performed which would warrant such an outcome.

The economic dependence of homekeeping women and the limited contribution which they make to the family livelihood may at times stimulate selfishness. Many women may assume that they have a right to support irrespective of their contribution. It is commonly believed that a husband should support his wife. This conception of the husband's responsibility at times merely requires that the wife should not be a gainful worker. But in other cases it includes the popular ideal of "ladyhood," that status in which women "do not work but are worked for." According to some, all menial laborious tasks must be delegated and the wife be free during the major part of the day for leisure-time pursuits. Thus many who consider that the husband should support his wife infer that he should support her in comparative idleness. Perhaps this is, in part at least, a consequence of the insistence that woman's place is in the home in spite of the decline in household tasks which has occurred. A disproportionate share of leisure is likely to have a demoralizing effect. In many cases no reciprocal service is rendered for the economic benefit received. It is difficult, if not impossible, for a proper sense of social responsibility to develop when a woman feels that she has a "right to be kept." The present system of household production and the social attitudes surrounding it contribute to this. There is a tendency to emulate the idle group. With many women, however, this is an ideal toward which they strive rather than something actually attained.

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[10] *The Family,* p. 284.

The limitation which household production imposes on the development of the worker is, in part at least, due to her comparative isolation, and the limited contacts which she makes because she works and lives in the same place. She does not have the same contacts with her fellows as even the most lowly industrial workers. She may feel that she is somewhat apart from rather than a part of the main business of society. Her productive life is isolated, and her social life tends to be bound up with the family. To be sure, undesirable effects could be wiped out if the woman built up for herself other worthwhile contacts. To do this calls for a consciousness of need and a deliberate choice; and few people are sufficiently conscious of their needs to reach out and plan for those things essential for an all-round development. Unless they happen as a part of the routine of life which is to some extent forced upon one, many worthwhile things are not experienced, even though they are within the reach of each. Mayo says:

> The woman, no less than the man, needs an interest that will relate her with the society outside the home. . . . The whole area of mental hygiene work seems to show that every one of us needs an active working relation with society about us. This working relation must be independent of our relation with society through our associates in the home.[11]

Changes since the Industrial Revolution have diminished the training women derive from household tasks. Households are smaller, and many stimulating tasks are gone. Pinchbeck, describing the changes brought about by the agrarian revolution in England says:

> Under the new system, there was not the same incentive for the farmer's wife to develop the business ability which had been essential before. . . . The market and the many-

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[11] "The Father in the Present-Day Home," *Concerning Parents,* a symposium on present-day parenthood, pp. 41-2.

> sided activities of the household had provided excellent opportunities for the development and exercise of practical skill and business acumen which had no counterpart in the leisured life adopted. The training in financial affairs and the knowledge that the family income consisted of the joint earnings of the farmer and his wife not only added interest to women's lives, but also tended to a development of independence and initiative.[12]

SATISFACTION DERIVED FROM WORK AND ECONOMIC STATUS

In evaluating household production from the standpoint of the woman the satisfaction she derives from this job should also be considered. Satisfaction is an illusive thing yet very important; and chronic dissatisfaction may occur to a harmful degree even though no open complaint is made.

Dissatisfaction with homemaking as an occupation is common among some groups. The reasons given for gainful employment by some married women would indicate this. Collier found that out of the hundred married women studied, 22 gave as a reason for gainful employment, "to enrich life," and 87 sought "an outlet for energy." These women were on the whole in professional and executive positions.[13] It is interesting to compare this group with married women in industry. Only 11 per cent of the 728 mothers in industry who were studied by Hughes gave personal preference as the reason for their gainful employment. Sixty-three per cent of these women were in manufacturing and mechanical industries and 30 per cent in domestic and personal service. These occupations do not offer many personal advantages in contrast with household production.[14]

The lingering arts and crafts, such as food preparation and clothing construction, provide tasks which may constitute a source of satisfaction to many workers. A manipulative process yields pleasure to one who likes to work with her hands, and have a tangible product as the evidence of her labor. The fashioning of materials, seeing work develop under one's hands, affords a means of self-expression to some. Some people believe that the most contented housewives are those who at the end of the day have some tangible product to show for their labor, fruit put up, dresses made, new curtains hung. It may be, however, that the joy that comes from these arises because of certain traditional associations. These were the joy and pride of our mothers; our early notions of thrift and family welfare were associated with them. Every household task, cleaning, child care, marketing, and household accounting as well as manipulative tasks such as cooking and sewing hold possibilities of satisfaction for the worker. Skill must be developed though, standards of performance established, and the relation of the task to family welfare recognized.

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[12] *Women Workers and the Industrial Revolution,* pp. 34-5.

[13] *Marriage and Careers,* p. 13.

[14] *Mothers in Industry,* pp. 128-34.

In household production the processes are not so minutely divided among the workers but that each can see the contribution which she makes to the finished product. This consciousness of contribution permits a certain sense of proprietorship, which gives satisfaction to the worker because it identifies her with the finished product. In industry, workers are often not conscious of their share in the finished article. But this is not so in household production. Satisfaction may be secured from single tasks and from the job as a whole.

Since the worker and the manager are one, the woman has a feeling of control. She can do the work in her own way; her house is an expression of her standard of cleanliness, care, and beauty, and in some instances the direct product of her constructive imagination. Even though the goods she makes are soon used she has a tangible proof of her labors often denied many industrial and other paid workers.

An additional source of satisfaction to the worker lies in the fact that household production is carried on in direct response to the needs of the members of her own family. Owing to this relationship, tasks which might be unpleasant if performed for others may be willingly undertaken. The assurance of a livelihood and an honorable position in society without the stress and strain of a competitive life is also a source of much satisfaction to many workers.

The woman who accepts the traditional rôle of homemaker may also derive much satisfaction because of her adherence to custom. Groves, discussing the psychology of the woman who works, says:

> No matter how successful she may be in the out-of-the-home work she carries on, this woman often feels keenly the unspoken reproaches of her family and her neighbors because her house and her home are not as those of other women in her community. . . . The very scorn with which she speaks of household tasks reveals the depth of feeling tied up with her attitude toward what society expects of her.[15]

We have been looking at possibilities of satisfaction for the worker in household production. Many circumstances, however, reduce or prevent the workers from fully realizing the satisfaction which might be obtained from the performance of the various household tasks. Their comparative isolation deprives them of companionship while at work. Tead says of industrial workers: "Employees whose work requires them to be alone in stock rooms, storage places or at watchmen's jobs have often to be paid additionally or to be transferred occasionally to other jobs, or they will leave."[16]

Two major obstacles prevent household workers from finding in their tasks a medium of satisfaction and self-expression. First, the short period which elapses between much of the production and the consumption which follows tends to detract from the worker's satisfaction. She feels that her labor results in nothing permanent. The second is the large proportion of routine tasks. The most apparent aspect of household production, to some women is often "more meals to cook," "more dishes to wash," "more cleaning to be done." Each day is an unending round of these. There is a sameness in the work of each day and a feeling of monotony even though there is a great variety in the tasks. Though many of these routine tasks may offer an opportunity for artistic expression, yet the very fact that they are daily occurrences reduces their significance to the worker. As an object of study or analysis in order to discover the best method of performance routine tasks may be of considerable interest for a while; but once the "best" method is discovered such tasks are apt to be of little interest to the workers.

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[15] *American Marriage and Family Relationships,* p. 61.

[16] *Instincts in Industry,* p. 134.

The worker's satisfaction is also reduced by those tasks which are laborious; these, as has already been pointed out, are on the decline. In addition, women may be bored by the tasks which make little demands on their capabilities. Some household tasks do require a considerable degree of skill in order that a product of high quality be turned out, one of which the worker would be proud. But for these tasks the worker is often poorly trained, and so finds little satisfaction in the good which she is able to produce.

The general attitude of certain groups regarding household tasks probably lessens considerably the satisfaction of many household workers, especially those who, if released from household production, would engage in more "superior" work. The common attitude of certain people has long been to condemn manual labor as menial and look down on those who perform it. It is a usual occurrence that as soon as the family can afford it, much of the manual labor is turned over to paid workers. The feeling that the tasks are menial may in part be due to the lower social status of the paid workers to whom the work might be delegated, as well as to the laborious and burdensome character of the tasks themselves.

Peixotto, in a recent study of the professional standard of living, expresses the sentiment that many household tasks are not fitting for the women of professional families. She says:

> Since as a group, women who married into the profession were specialized women "of education, refinement and good taste," with traditions which led them to the more ladylike pursuits of the fine arts and of hospitality rather than to routine domestic work, these years of strain, of trying to content themselves with being "nothing more than a good cook, housemaid, seamstress, nurse and washerwoman," it was asserted, broke their health and constituted a long drudgery which undermined the morale of many of them.[17]

Here, it would seem: "The irksomeness of labor is a spiritual fact; it lies in the indignity of the thing."[18] Of interest also is the attitude of those investigating the incomes and living costs of the Yale University faculty. The writer states:

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[17] *Getting and Spending at the Professional Standard of Living,* p. 42.

> The most significant aspect of the mode of life of a family is the amount of service that they can afford. In Europe the sharpest line of demarcation between classes is that above which at least one servant is regularly employed, and below which the wife does the cooking and the other housework. Below it is the mechanic class; above it the professional class.[19]

Throughout the study runs the thought that the wife contributing earnings or even performing certain household tasks is an indication that the salary is not high enough to maintain the standard which ought to be maintained; that menial work should not be the lot of the professional family.

We do not know what proportion of women look upon household production as menial. Hinkle believes that: "The present movement of women away from the care of family and home represents the reaction from the past cultural implications that this work was less important and on a lower plane, than that of a man digging a ditch or selling real estate."[20] The increasing attention to child care and training in the home will probably increase the social importance attached to household production as a whole, and raise its value in the eyes of the worker. Gesell believes: "The new premium which is placed upon the importance of the preschool years of childhood has already heightened the importance of the task of parenthood."[21]

The worker's sense of social importance and the satisfaction obtained from the performance of her tasks are, at times, affected by the fact that the products of her labor do not go to the market; they receive no pecuniary valuation. Since her contribution cannot be measured quantitatively, both she, and society as a whole, often fail to appreciate the contribution which is actually made. The absence of money payment for the services has much the same effect. In a society where success and achievement are measured in pecuniary terms, it is not strange that many women are unable to perceive the importance of their work. A more correct evaluation of the contribution to be made through household production depends upon a saner appraisal of welfare as contrasted with wealth, and consumption as contrasted with production.

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[18] T. Veblen, "The Instinct of Workmanship and the Irksomeness of Labor," *Am. J. Soc.*, IV, 201.

[19] *Income and Living Costs of a University Faculty*, p. 6.

[20] "Men and Women as Family Members," *Concerning Parents*, p. 21.

[21] "The Preschool Child and the Present Day Parent," *Intelligent Parenthood*, p. 257.

Not only does the housewife receive no direct payment for her services, but her legal claim to the money income and accumulated wealth of the family is often limited. She may feel that her position as a household worker deprives her of her economic "independence," and as a consequence she may resent the tasks which prevent her carrying on gainful work. It is not the intention, however, to imply that the majority of women are concerned about their economic "dependence"; or that the woman does not get her share of the money income; but rather that this is a point of difference between household production and gainful employment which brings dissatisfaction to many. As a way out of this difficulty Kneeland suggests that husband and wife be joint partners, each sharing joint expenses and dividing the surplus on a fifty-fifty basis.[22]

Dependence on the whole has increased. Before the Industrial Revolution the housewife sold in the market the surplus products which the family did not need. This the farm woman still does. But urban living has, in some ways, reduced the means of her contributing to the family income, thus making the woman more dependent on the other members of the family.

When a woman is trained for some special work, her dissatisfaction with household tasks may arise from her inability to continue with it. She may feel that through it her capabilities would have been more fully developed, that it offered wider opportunities for interesting problems and stimulating personal contacts. Those with outstanding ability in a special kind of work may long to devote themselves to that because they enjoy it or because they feel that in this way they can make their greatest contribution to society. Dissatisfaction is likely to be keenest where the woman feels that if she were freed from restraints of custom she could readily combine marriage, childbearing, and her professional interests.

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[22] "Woman's Economic Contribution in the Home," *Annals,* CXLIII (1929).

The mere lack of freedom to choose their occupation causes some women to accept their household tasks without question, neither asking nor longing for an alternative. In other cases it may increase the feeling of monotony and routine since there is little prospect of change. What one is not allowed to experience may appear the only thing which makes life worth while.

The question should, however, be raised as to whether the discontent of many women with household activities is really justified. The remembrance of a former occupation tends in time to take on a rosy hue; the disadvantages often fade. It is with possible rather than probable achievements that household production is compared. It is true that household production has lost many of its opportunities for creative work. But if women were "emancipated" from housework they would not as a group escape into a world of interesting activities. Eliot, for many years president of Harvard University, writes: "I say that the normal occupation of women is an intellectual one in all walks of life; that in the lowest walks of life the work of woman, fairly done, is higher than the work of corresponding men; and that the same ought to be true, and often is true in the higher walks of life."[23] Wadia says: "Women complain of the infinite dullness and monotony of domestic occupation. Yet how infinitely more dull and monotonous is the dreary work generally performed by women employed in industries."[24] Perhaps if alternate tasks alone were compared, this would be true for many workers. But gainful employment usually brings with it a contact with other people and makes possible a sharing in group life which is now denied the isolated household worker.

GREATER OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE HOMEMAKER

The homemaker who is discontented, who feels that her job imposes handicaps, has three possible ways of improving her lot: (1) through developing further homemaking itself, (2) by gainful work, either directly in some work of her own or indirectly by sharing in her husband's job, and (3) by means of leisure activities. No general prescription can be given. The best solution depends on the limitations of homemaking to each woman and possible opportunities open to her.

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[23] C. W. Eliot, *Man and His Beliefs* (1926), Vol. I, p. 164.

[24] *Ethics of Feminism*, p. 74.

Probably the women who are at present happiest in homemaking are those who enjoy working with materials. Those interested chiefly in ideas are not likely to be content unless they are alive to the opportunity afforded them in such tasks as directing family consumption and child care and training or in achieving a truly delightful environment for family and friends. These present interesting and varied situations which challenge the alert mind and allow plenty of scope for study and trying out new ideas. The most discontented women are likely to be those who are most interested in working with people, in organizing and directing others. There is little scope for this in the present household. Women spend most of their time actually doing tasks.

Discontent may arise because hours of work are long, or work fatiguing, or because of the woman's own incompetence. Such conditions should arouse the worker to remove the cause of the dissatisfaction. But discontent does not always stimulate action. In fact, the discontented woman seems at times to be bound by an evil spell, wrapped in an inertia, unable to utilize opportunities at hand. Her sense of incompetence because of lack of training may irk her, be a source of annoyance, yet she may do nothing about it even though there are many channels through which she might increase her efficiency and thereby derive more pleasure from her work.

The woman who misses the stimulating effect of competition as a spur to greater efficiency might find it useful to acquaint herself with quality and performance standards by which to measure her own achievement. Leaders and educators would do well to recognize, however, that mere competition is a very primitive incentive already much overemphasized in our society. Lasting joy from one's work is more likely to come from seeing its relation to welfare.

A combination of gainful work with homemaking may appear to be the ideal solution, but, for many women at present, it appears to be the least possible. Some energetic, enterprising women able and willing to utilize opportunities which arise often work out most ideal combinations of gainful work with homemaking.

Fortunately for most workers, life is not all labor. In leisure hours can be sought those experiences denied during working hours. The prospect of homemakers in this respect is very bright, for they as a whole have had a greater increase in leisure than other workers, and probably could reduce their working time a good deal more if they so desired. Can this leisure be used to offset the greater isolation of their work, the large proportion of routine tasks, and their failure to continue work in which they are specially interested?

Increased leisure compensates many women for any disadvantages of homemaking as an occupation. Through clubs of various kinds, community projects, and more informal social contacts the disadvantages of isolation in work disappear. Opportunity is afforded for working with other people. Leisure may also permit the following up of a special line of interest, literary, musical, or otherwise. More time may be given to recreation one enjoys, e.g., sports, bridge, or handicrafts.

But many women are discontented in spite of their leisure. In some cases this may be due merely to an excess of leisure. To some women, homemaking is just as satisfactory as any other job but they may have too much free time. Less frequently it happens that a woman derives little pleasure from homemaking and leisure, because to her some other work is all-important. The woman sees some other occupation which would bring her the associations desired, which would make possible the expanding of her abilities. The most intense dissatisfaction with homemaking occurs among such women.

Leisure is a source of happiness only when it brings freedom to do those things which are enjoyed. The leisure of many homemakers is not something they have sought; more often it is thrust upon them. Many women would rather be working if they could only find interesting worthwhile things to do. To them leisure does not mean opportunity. The enforced idleness which occurs may be more painful than prolonged labor. Instead of turning from their labor with glad faces they are forced to find something to "kill time." That this attitude is common should not surprise us. In a society where interest has been and still is concentrated on production, where achievement is usually measured in dollars and cents, not in the art of living, the woman has no background of custom and tradition to serve as a guide for her leisure hours.

In such a circumstance futile and worthless activities are bound to be common. Everywhere we see women engaged in them. The flood of magazines appealing especially to women is more nearly an opiate to the mind, an escape from reality, than a source of great pleasure or a means of gaining a fuller understanding of life. Club activities absorb a large volume of leisure. Interesting, worthwhile projects are often undertaken, and much good to the community may be accomplished. The personal gain to the women, however, often is nil. Since the activities are frequently undertaken to while away idle hours, the need for thoroughness is not perceived. With this attitude the undertaking does not challenge the woman's ability or demand the maximum development of talents even in a limited field. Consequently leisure activities in many cases fall far short of a job in the development they stimulate. The performance standard is often very low; things are undertaken and only half-accomplished. Many women tend to pass from one activity to another with the net result that they are eternal amateurs in leisure activities as well as in production.

Without a real desire for leisure, women tend to drift from one thing to another, allowing emulation, convention, and advertising to direct their leisure without discovering the real opportunity which leisure affords either for enjoying life or undertaking some serious work. A constructive program of education for homemakers is at the present time incomplete without attention being given to the use of leisure time. At present, schools are largely absorbed with training for earning a living rather than in teaching people how to live.

The possibilities of leisure cannot be achieved without developing a philosophy of leisure. Where work is a virtue, leisure activities usually have to be justified in terms of the good they do either to society or to the person who indulges in it. Leisure is then looked upon as a period of recuperation in order that efficiency be increased, not something which is entered into for the enjoyment and pleasure derived. Perhaps there has been too much emphasis on using leisure to develop one's abilities and not enough on doing the thing which one thoroughly enjoys. Do we not need to develop a capacity for light-heartedness and play? Certainly we have far too little of this. We need more spontaneity and joy in leisure. Woman's problem concerning leisure is greater than man's merely because in some groups she has more than he. It is very doubtful whether a satisfactory philosophy for women can evolve while work remains enthroned as the main aim in the lives of the other adult members of the family.

Reducing the disadvantages associated with homemaking as an occupation will depend on the initiative of individual homemakers. Leadership is needed at times, however, to help women discover the source of their discontent and in all cases to awaken them to a creative interest in their own personal development and to the opportunities for joyous living.

THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY

Many theories have been developed concerning the position of women in society. Müller-Lyer enumerates several general causes which he believes determine it. "Women," he feels, "are valued in proportion to the economic necessity of their work." They are more apt to be men's equal the more occupations of the two sexes are similar or equal. Accordingly the decline in household production has weakened while the entrance of women into specialized industry has strengthened the position of women. Westermarck believes, however: "The general theory that women are more oppressed in proportion as they are less useful is open to doubt." Their lack of usefulness he considers may be a measure of respect.[25]

Military social type, Müller-Lyer finds, is inimical to women since the social functions of men and women are unequal and military obedience is exacted at home; the relation of protection tends to be changed to dominance. Wealth is found to be favorable to women. With increasing wealth, people attain imaginative insight into another's point of view. According to Müller-Lyer a close relation exists between woman's position and the strength of the family authority. If the family, not the community or state, has authority over the lives of its members the position of the woman is usually weak. If the state authority, not family, is uppermost the position of women is strong.[26]

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[25] "The Position of Women in Early Civilization," *Am. J. Soc.*, 10 (1904-05), 419.

The future position of women depends on a combination of circumstances. Further specialization seems inevitable, and with it economic independence increases. Müller-Lyer points out that the transition period is unfavorable since the woman then has a double burden. He says: "So far the entire social fabric is not adequately arranged for the differentiated woman and strong hostile powers exist which may become so great that the woman's movement may regress for awhile."

Opposition to changes in woman's position arises largely because of probable influence on the family as an institution. The influence of the change in household production on the family will be discussed in the following chapter.

[26] *The Evolution of Modern Marriage,* 1930, pp. 186-205.

CHAPTER XX

HOW HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION AFFECTS THE FAMILY

The production which the family carries on for itself cannot but have an effect on family life. The status of household production and the traditions concerning woman's rôle affect the attitude of men and women toward marriage and also the homemaking and social responsibilities of husband and wife. With the decline of household production many married women are combining gainful work with household tasks. This influences family relationships in many ways. Parent-child relationships have also been affected. In examining the relationship between household production and family life one should seek to be as objective as possible, to see family practices as factors which may, on the one hand, enrich the lives of the members or, on the other, cramp and prevent them from realizing their full stature.

We experience difficulty in perceiving the effect of household production on family life because it is only one of many influences. Tasks have been passing from the home, and women have been entering gainful employment. At the same time cities have been growing, public education becoming more universal, ideals of democracy spreading. Divorce has been made easier. Wealth has been increasing and economic security has declined, bringing greater anxiety and uncertainty. Transportation facilities have improved so that people move around more freely, disrupting established community relationships.

THE ATTITUDE OF MEN AND WOMEN TOWARD MARRIAGE

Since the livelihood of the married woman not gainfully employed is usually dependent in large measure on her husband's earnings the woman before marriage tends to be somewhat mercenary in her choice of husband. Her attitude toward him after marriage may also be mercenary. This dependence on the wife on her husband's money income has certain harmful effects. Gilman, in her book, *Women and Economics,* protests against the economic dependence of women; against the fact that woman's work and status in life are determined by the marriage relationship. She maintains that the economic dependence of women has led to an excessive stimulation of sex harmful to the race, and that many unwholesome social conditions are thus fostered. She holds that social progress of the race will be assured only if "economic production" is common to both sexes and man ceases to be woman's economic environment. The picture drawn by Gilman may in many respects be exaggerated, yet the question remains: Does the woman's present economic dependence have undesirable results?

This question becomes more challenging when we recognize that women who confine their productive activities to the household are more dependent on others than formerly. As long as families lived on farms the woman had a source of raw materials apart from money income and also could, in most instances, readily contribute to money income as well. To an increasing extent women are, however, combining some gainful work with household tasks. As families are faced with the question of whether gainful work or household tasks is more advantageous there may be a deepening sense of the woman's customary contribution. Even though the wife does not do gainful work there may be a recognition that husband and wife are mutually dependent on each other for their real income.

It is impossible, and by no means necessary, to eliminate from the thought of those considering marriage the possible economic advantage which marriage may bring. But when the economic advantage becomes a deciding factor, considerations important to desirable family relationships may be overlooked. Every change which tends to make the mercenary attitude less pronounced may be considered to that extent desirable.

As household production has decreased, the need for money income has become greater. As a result the money income of a man at the time he desires to marry may be insufficient to maintain his accustomed standard of living or that of the woman he wishes to marry. The income is most likely to be inadequate if the woman gives up her gainful work to assume the customary rôle of household producer. A certain amount of restraint, because of lack of funds necessary to establish a home and income to maintain it, is desirable. But marriage may be deferred too long. As the gainful employment of married women becomes more customary, and it becomes easier to combine gainful work with a limited volume of household production, the average age of marriage will probably decline.

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES OF HUSBAND AND WIFE

To an increasing extent the husband's interest has been absorbed in activities which keep him away from home during the greater part of the day. In contrast, the woman's tasks are still centered in the home and have to do directly with family welfare. She often has more leisure than the husband. As a result, the wife in many cases has assumed a new family rôle, and a new social philosophy regarding her functions in the home has developed. Hinkle says:

> For many years it has been a commonplace observation that women in America dominated the home and the family to an overwhelming degree. The wife and mother carried the entire responsibility for the training and education of the children, the father's chief rôle being that of money-getter; otherwise he played little part in any personal relation with the family.[1]

Woodhouse has outlined what she believes are the responsibilities of the modern homemaker. She considers that, in addition to performing certain productive functions, the woman is

> the co-ordinator of the interests of the individuals in the family, the conciliator or arbitrator of the conflicting claims of the family members. It is she who has the task of formulating a philosophy of life for the family. . . . She has the function . . . of working out the relationship between the

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[1] "New Relations of Men and Women as Family Members," *Concerning Parents,* p. 6.

> family and the community, of translating the family problems in terms of the community situation.[2]

This conception of the woman's place in the family represents a change in the historic rôles of husband and wife. Is the father now to be looked upon only as the economic head of the family, and the mother as the social administrator? The question may well be asked whether the home is not suffering from too little economic responsibility on the part of women and too little responsibility for family life on the part of the men. In speaking of the position of the husband, Groves says:

> If he invests too much of himself in economic competition and cannot give to the family what it needs, his failure will lead to his wife's giving too much, so that the family becomes effeminate from the inability of the father to do his part. On the other hand, if the husband becomes too concerned with the family, he soon ceases to make headway in the fierce rivalries of business or the professions.[3]

The money income of the family may be increased by the husband leaving to his wife the working out of family relationships and the formulating of the philosophy of the family. Yet, in many cases, the woman is not as well qualified as the man for such responsibility. One member of the family with some leisure to give to the social life and personal relationships is better than none. But would it not be better for the family as a whole if there were two homemakers in the family?

FAMILY UNITY AND STABILITY

With the decline in household production the gainful employment of married women has been increasing; at the same time there has been a marked decline in family unity and stability. The association is evident, but what is the causal relation between these two changes? Some people consider that the gainful employment of married women is the all-inclusive cause of increasing family instability. Woodhouse says that present-day prophets of disaster consider that the chief reason for the demoralization of the family and the disappearing home is that women are leaving the home to enter industry and the professions.[4] Some would even go so far as to urge that all women "be ordered back to their kitchens." So simple an explanation of the factors adversely affecting the family should at once arouse the suspicions of anyone conscious of the great complexity of the changes occurring in our culture.

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[2] "The New Profession of Homemaking," *Survey Graphic*, 57 (1926, Dec.), 317.

[3] *American Marriage and Family Relationships*, p. 39.

The very fact that the gainful employment of married women is contrary to our mores may be the reason why so many look upon it as a demoralizing and disintegrating force. It runs counter to our established notions of the respective rôles of husband and wife. Groves says: "No more radical change in the entire history of the human family has ever happened than that through which we are now passing. . . . The family in all its aspects, and other social institutions in so far as they come in contact with the family, had become firmly adjusted to woman as a dependent of man."[5] A break with tradition may, however, cause only a temporary disturbance. New traditions and customs will gradually develop.

Many people point to the early American household in order to prove that family stability is increased if the wife busies herself at home, baking, cleaning, sewing, mending, and caring for the children. But since few are willing to return to the simple economic organization then prevailing, it is better to consider the desirable and undesirable effects of gainful employment on the family under modern conditions.

With the gainful employment of the wife or mother certain changes take place which affect family life; the father no longer has entire responsibility for the money income; women achieve a measure of economic independence and contribute money as well as carry on some direct production; the real income of the family changes; a change occurs in the common experience and interests of the group; and child-bearing does not so readily combine with the woman's work.

The greatest disintegrating force due to the gainful employment of women is considered by some to lie in the receipt of money wages by the wife. It may break down family unity not only by its effect on the wife but also by its effect on the husband.

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[4] "Women in Industry, the Family and the Home," *Industrial Psychology,* I (1926), 293.

[5] E. R. Groves, *Social Problems of the Family,* p. 74.

The wife's contribution to the money income of the family is believed by some to reduce the husband's sense of responsibility in providing a livelihood for the family. To continue gainful work after marriage might be a reflection on the husband's ability even though cleaning windows, scrubbing floors, and doing the family washing would not. The dependence of the family on the husband is expected by some people to keep his attention from straying too far from family interests. Much discussion of this sort seems to overlook the fact that men in many occupations cannot unaided supply the income necessary for family support. It is possible in some cases that the wife's earning may have a stabilizing effect on family relationships. Desertion by the husband frequently occurs among low-income families when the burden of supporting the family becomes intolerable. Desertion has in fact declined with the increase in the gainful employment of women. With their gainful employment money income increases and a greater quantity of goods is provided. Family relationships may be improved as a result.

We hear a great deal about the increase in economic independence which comes to the woman when she becomes a gainful worker and we tend to overlook the fact that in many families the money earned by the woman goes almost entirely to the family group. Her gainful employment nets little gain in her freedom to provide goods for herself alone. On the whole, however, gainful employment and the possibility of gainful employment have probably brought some gain in freedom of thought and action for all women.

The assurance that her economic needs can be met independently of her marital relationship affects the woman in a number of ways. Marriage ties are more likely to be broken if she fails to find in her marriage the companionship desired. Her economic independence may reduce her patience in working out satisfactory relationships. It may also challenge the husband to contribute more to marriage. The woman's failure to endure certain situations undoubtedly increases family instability. But since sound relationships cannot, in any great measure, be based on sufferance, this change has not brought any great loss.

Increased independence has another effect on husband-wife relationships. The woman may no longer feel obliged to suppress her opinions, or to yield so readily to the wishes of her husband. In fact, the new freedom may be accompanied by a revolt against the "divinely ordained superiority of man." Traditional husband-wife relationships have been based on the inferiority of woman and the superiority of man. The change is toward greater equality, with recognition being given to the difference in the rôle of each. A new honesty and frankness between men and women has arisen which has many wholesome effects on family life.

The possibility of family friction because of the wife's gainful work is pointed out by Mowrer. He says:

> To the unemancipated husband, her employment means a loss of power and supremacy which for generations has been the prerogative of the male. He tends to compensate with the demand for unquestioned submission to his wishes in petty matters, or belittles the efforts of his wife. In fact, intense jealousy is not unusual, should she threaten in any way to excel him.[6]

The gainful employment of the wife may result in a greater spirit of co-operation and mutual help within the family because the woman now may seem to be sharing more fully in the economic burden. In such cases there will not be the same apparent opposition of interests as tends to exist when the economic function of the husband is to provide the money income of the family, and the expenditure of that income is one of the main functions of his wife. Tugwell says: "It is very nearly true . . . that housewives in cities are changed into competitors rather than partners of their husbands."[7] It may be that the sharing of the wife in gainful work in some cases may aid in building up a greater sympathy and understanding between the husband and wife in regard to the contribution which each makes to the household enterprise.

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[6] *The Family,* Chicago (1932), p. 269.

[7] *American Economic Life,* p. 473.

A recent study of marriage provides some interesting facts in regard to the economic independence of the wife. Husbands of wives who did not earn were found to be far more content with their marriages than the husbands of wage-earners. Dependent wives were also found to be happier in their marriage than those who earned.[8] The writers consider that this may mean that "wives who find themselves unhappy in marriage go out seeking the satisfaction of money-making."[9]

Gainful work may be a source of family friction because the members miss certain services which the woman formerly performed. Buttons may be missing, stockings undarned. There may be less entertaining in the home. The wife's gainful work may reduce the time the members spend together.

Since the husband is usually away all day, the wife's absence does not affect their time together unless her hours of work do not coincide with his, and she, perhaps, arrives home later in the evening than he. Children too are away at school, but the mother's gainful employment may prevent her being at home when the regular school period is over. When the mother is at home all day the children probably spend more time with her, sharing to some extent tasks and leisure.

The addition of gainful work to the remaining household tasks at times puts too great a burden on the woman. Too little recreational or leisure time is left, and she may be too weary at the end of the day to share in the social life of the family: to join in their play, to share in their experience. One earning wife, in discussing her experience, says:

> My difficulty was that the modest *social* life of the family suffered. I had adequate domestic service for my household and my child but after the day's teaching was over, and the duties which were particularly *mother's* were completed, I was ready to read the *Boston Transcript* and go to bed. Whereas my husband wished to have his friends for dinner, to go out to play bridge or to the theatre. Naturally, he felt that mar-

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[8] G. V. Hamilton and Kenneth MacGowan, *What Is Wrong with Marriage?* New York (1929), p. 84. The findings are based on replies to a series of questions of 100 men and 100 women, all married.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 68.

> riage and *a teaching job* required more energy than I could afford to give.[10]

With the decline in common productive experience, the leisure-time activities of the group are of great importance in establishing and maintaining common interests. Gainful employment, especially if it encroaches much on leisure time, is likely to have undesirable effects on family relationships.

A strong argument may be advanced, however, that the common experience of the group is increased rather than diminished by the gainful employment of the wife and mother. The members of the family may share more fully in the household tasks. The father may assume more parental responsibilities, rather than looking upon them as the duty of the mother. In addition, the wife's experience as a gainful worker may broaden the field of common interest which she shares with her husband.

In her gainful employment the woman establishes new interests and personal contacts. These new contacts may increase her interests so that she contributes more to family life than formerly. There are those who fear, however, that the woman will, because of these new interests, love her husband and children less, be less concerned about their welfare and less interested in their achievements. If this does occur it may be that family life will suffer unless the interest of the husband and the children in the achievements of the wife and mother is sufficient to compensate for the diminished attention which she gives to theirs. Hinkle believes:

> It cannot be denied that to-day the relations between the sexes are in a state of disturbance and uncertainty, and that the family is seriously affected thereby. Many women are in great conflict over the rival claims of career and family . . . the very newness of the freedom of opportunity and of the sense of their own value and independence has produced a headiness and inadequate adaptation to their new status.[11]

Every individual craves response and recognition of himself as an individual. This response is sought both within the home and in the community. On the whole, the woman is very dependent on the home. As a result she may make abnormal demands on the other members of her family. Many psychologists will agree with Pruette when she says:

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[10] Anne B. Kennon, "College Wives Who Work," *J. Am. Ass'n. Univ. Women,* XX (June, 1927), 104.

[11] "New Relations of Men and Women as Family Members," *Concerning Parents,* p. 13.

> The mother must have outside interests, genuine interests, preferably impersonal, if she is not to cling too fiercely to the other members of the family. She must find some place where she acts as a person rather than as a mother, or there will be no freedom possible in the home.[12]

At times this clinging may increase the unity and stability of the family, but in other cases it leads to a revolt of the other members, and in still others to unwholesome relationships which are undesirable even though they may lead to greater family stability.

The gainful employment of married women may affect family unity and stability in yet another way. Child-bearing, because of it, may be postponed, at times permanently. If this decision on the part of the wife is in accord with the wishes of her husband its effect on family unity and stability is not likely to be so great as if this were a point of disagreement. But even where the husband and wife agree, the failure to bear children often loosens family ties and causes the husband and wife to grow apart more than they would had they had a common bond in their children in whose welfare and development they were jointly interested.

PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

Changes in household production have affected parent-child relationships in two ways. The child now contributes less than formerly to the real income of the family. As a result the economic advantage of having children has declined. The former sharing of economic activity had an integrating effect. It tended to develop a body of common interests and a sense of the interdependence of the members. It ensured the contacts which made it possible for parents and children to become acquainted. With the passing of tasks, work contacts have almost ceased. Common experiences of the present family must come through other activities. Leisure activities must be shared. Conscious thought must be given to these, since they are not so much a part of our life's routine as is work.

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[12] "The Married Woman and the Part-Time Job," *Annals*, 143 (1929, May), 305-6.

The second change in parent-child relationships has come with the delegation of much of the child care and training to workers outside the family circle. The church and school are assuming increased responsibility for education and organized play. These changes have not only reduced the time that children spend at home but they have introduced new interests, authorities, and affections. Broken have been many of the family bonds which existed when the child's life was centered in the home. Departures from custom here are also a source of conflict.

MALADJUSTMENTS DUE TO CULTURAL LAG

Present family conflict and instability are, by many students of family life, believed to be due to lack of adjustment in the various parts of our culture. Certain changes have occurred, and old attitudes and practices have continued even though not in accord with changed social conditions. For example, the wife's earning would not disturb the husband-wife relationship if this were the accepted way of the woman's helping to support the family. Distress of parents because their authority is questioned by their children may also be due to failure to recognize the new influences which have entered their children's lives. It is generally recognized that we accept new methods of production and new goods more rapidly than we do changes in our personal relationships. Chapin writes:

> The material equipment of industry and of the home has been revolutionized by the introduction of labor-saving machinery. The effect has been to strain severely, if not actually to disrupt, the fabric of relationships which holds together the four type parts of institutional structure: attitudes and conventionalized behavior patterns; symbolic culture traits; utilitarian culture traits; and descriptive language symbols.

He considers that great changes have occurred in our material culture, while our non-material culture has remained practically static; and that today the mores of the monogamous family and of the Christian religion are much as they were in the agricultural economy of the eighteenth century.[13] Such a cultural lag leads to discord and friction of various kinds. In place of attempting to re-establish previous practices it may be that what we need are new family attitudes and mores that will correspond to the new social environment.

FAMILY FUNCTIONS

The effect of recent changes on family life becomes clear only if we perceive the rôle of the family in society, the contribution which it makes to the welfare and satisfaction of individual members. The family through all ages has had four major functions: the biological, that is the regulation of sex relations and the birth of children, the economic, cultural, and affectional functions.

The economic function of the family is quite complex, for the family is an integral part of our system of production, distribution, and consumption. Since attention is often concentrated on production, many people feel that the economic function of the family has almost disappeared. Families now produce for themselves a smaller proportion of the goods used than they formerly did. However, the production they carry on is still much more important than many people suppose. But apart from production, the family is still an important economic unit. Other economic processes are to a large extent organized and regulated on the basis of family life. The contribution of the members both through money income and direct production is shared by the group on a communistic basis. In the family, children and aged unable to provide for themselves are cared for. Through the family private property is transmitted.

The cultural function performed by the family is two-fold. The day-to-day contacts of the family provide a medium through which the members gain an insight into the meaning of life. It also serves as a medium for the transmission of customs and traditions and the accumulated knowledge of society. The affectional function is very important. Since the family is an intimate

[13] *Cultural Change*, pp. 312-3.

group with a high degree of permanence it plays an important part in meeting the individual's need for affection, love, sympathy, and understanding. Those who feel that this need can be met only by a stable family group are especially alarmed by the rising divorce rate.

The importance one attaches to the family can best be revealed by considering, for example, the question raised by Plant. He asks: "Were it possible today to wipe out the family and all the elements of cultural lag that would so surely re-establish it, would an essentially similar structure be reared?"[14] All of us will probably agree that some kind of small group life, whether family or otherwise, seems necessary. In a small group each individual is important. If his needs call for special consideration, only in a small group are they likely to receive satisfactory attention. In a small group each has the opportunity of being known and knowing others intimately, of giving and receiving more fully of sympathy, love, and affection.

The family of husband, wife, and children is a natural small group bound by ties not present in any other. Parental and sexual relationships increase the group sympathy, understanding, and security of affection. In the family we have social life at its maximum intensity. Strong affectional ties make it possible for the family to contribute in a unique way to the cultural development of the individuals, helping them to penetrate reality, to understand human strength and weakness. The family is society in miniature, members of different ages and varied contacts live together and, through the very closeness of their contacts, contribute to one another. The strength of family bonds ensures the performance of important economic functions, the care for the sick, the young, and the aged. Members are spurred on to greater endeavor because they are working for a group for whom the affectional ties are strong. In speaking of the essential functions of the family McIver says: "The peculiar claim of the family is not that it alone fulfils any one function; it is that it alone provides a way of combining and harmonizing certain closely related functions."[15]

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[14] "The Child as a Member of the Family," *Annals,* 160 (1932, March), 66.

[15] *Society,* p. 133.

It is because the family plays such an important rôle in society that family instability is viewed with alarm. Family instability threatens the affectional security of individuals and the present economic security of its members. Through the family, sex and the bearing of children are regulated. If the family ceases to function, society must evolve a multitude of new customs to provide for the biological, economic, cultural and affectional needs which are now being met by the family.

THE FUTURE OF THE FAMILY

Since we have always had some form of family life it is safe to assume that it will continue although its functions will be modified. But change should not be alarming. All living things change. McIver believes: "Economic change has deeply affected the form and character of the family but it does not affect basic biological facts and the social needs which create the essential functions of the family."[16]

Sapir after examining the changes which the family is undergoing states that those who prophesy that the home will disappear if the productive activities continue to decline are mistaking surgery for murder. He believes that: "We have been thinking too much about the institutional and therefore secondary aspects of the family and too little about the biological and psychological foundations of the institution."[17]

Havelock Ellis in speaking of the changes affecting the family says:

> Many believe that the family is today in a perilous position. . . . The ever-increasing approach to social and industrial equality of the sexes, the steady rise and extension of the divorce movement, the changed conceptions of the morality of sexual relationships, and the spread of contraception—these new influences it is supposed—must destroy marriage and undermine the family. . . . Not one of them, however, when examined with care, bears within it any necessary seeds of destruction. On the contrary, they may purify and fortify, rather than weaken, the institution of the family; enable it to

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[16] *Society*, p. 124.

[17] "What Is the Family Still Good For?" *American Mercury*, 19 (1930), 149.

> work more vigorously and effectively rather than impair its functions as what has been termed the "unit of civilization."[18]

The question is yet to be answered as to what kind and how much household production should be carried on by the members in order to maximize the social benefits derived from family life, and in order that the family retain enough vitality to serve as a co-ordinator of the personal life of its members.

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[18] Article in C. Beard, *Whither Mankind,* p. 208.

Part VI

THE FUTURE OF HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION

CHAPTER XXI

THE HOUSEHOLD FACES THE FUTURE

History reveals that household production has constantly changed as the economic environment of the family has altered, and that during any given period it is the result of innumerable adjustments. Recent changes have been rapid and far-reaching. When one views the past and examines the present one cannot but wonder what the future holds.

The household is not without its prophets, critics, and experimenters. Many of them have been concerned with what they consider to be socially advantageous rather than what was likely or certain to happen. Those who believe that a decline in household production has a disintegrating effect on the family protest against further decline and in some cases agitate for a return of former tasks. In few cases is a practical program suggested; most of the protestations end in a "should" or a "should not." Borsodi is an exception in this respect. He not only maintains that the welfare of society would be promoted if household production were increased to a point where the woman as well as the other members of the family gave a much greater portion of their time to direct production, but his family provided a practical demonstration. The story of this is briefly told in a series of articles in the *New Republic*, July, 1929. The demonstration is not, however, proof that all or even the majority of families could successfully follow his example. A relatively high money income and a favorable location, making possible diversified farming, contributed to the success of his experiment. Moreover, the experiment was conducted when the children were young. Many tasks may be worth while then but not later when the children are grown.

Those anticipating or desiring further decline look forward to the time when food will be served at community centers or delivered to homes ready to serve; when trained workers directed from a central agency will perform many tasks such as cleaning which must remain within the home. They foresee that nurseries with trained attendants will care for children. Family tasks will be reduced to general management, the market selection of clothing and some of the household furnishings, all food selection being done by the central agency. In contrast with this picture is the belief that man will continue to be the principal gainful worker, and woman's work will largely be confined to serving her family within the home.

Judgment regarding the future of household production should be based as far as possible on a knowledge and understanding of our society. The future is bound up with our customs and prejudices, with our standards, the way in which we want to live, and with the development of our economic institutions.

FACTORS INCREASING HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION OR CHECKING FURTHER DECLINE

Customs and traditions are powerful forces tying us to the past. They are influential even though a product of an earlier period and no longer in accord with the best interest of society. Although they can delay, and in some cases delay considerably, yet they cannot forever resist continued pressure to change if they are out of accord with other elements of our culture.

A change is also delayed by the fact that many homekeeping women like their occupation. Even though many interesting tasks are gone and many women are irked by the routine and other undesirable features of household production yet it does lack the extreme monotony of many kinds of gainful work. In addition the worker has greater freedom. As a consequence, many gainfully employed women look forward to the time when they will be released from the strain of gainful work. It may be that the absence of competition limits the level of personal development attained; yet the fact remains that many women prefer household activities to such gainful work as they have experienced.

The adaptation of labor-saving machinery to household use and the extension of power lines play a part in keeping tasks within the home. These may prevent tasks from leaving the home, and may occasionally restore some which have already gone. This equipment must be inexpensive, easy to operate, and not readily put out of order. Borsodi sees the possibility of machines for food preparation, clothmaking, and clothing construction which he considers would make it practicable for household members to carry on the production of many goods.[1] The Lynds, however, do not look upon the introduction of labor-saving machines as an important long-time factor. They consider:

> There is real reason for suspecting . . . that the slackening of the drift toward centralized laundering of clothing outside the home that has appeared in connection with the installation of costly electrical machine units used only one day a week in hundreds upon hundreds of Middletown homes represents not "progress" but a back-eddy in home-making technique.[2]

The future of production depends largely on what additional goods we want. As machines become more efficient and labor is freed, are people going to demand more and more standardized goods? Soule considers that there is a real chance "that forms of manufacture which in previous years deserted the home or the local shop for the giant factory will return to it again. It is literally true that some kinds of products, in which aesthetic quality is dominant, or in which style changes or the demand for individuality are important, can be not only better, but more cheaply made by hand than by ordinary factory methods." Women, he points out, are returning to hooked rugs and even more difficult textile products, and primitive types of hand pottery are in demand.[3] A renewed interest in crafts may result, however, in small specialized shops rather than work being done at home.

An increase in the real wages of industrial workers would, in many cases, increase household production. Many married women are gainfully employed because the money income is not sufficient to provide those goods which can best be procured with money. If the money income, without the aid of the wife, were "adequate," or more nearly so, her labor would tend to be turned to household production. However, any general increase in wages would also increase the potential earning power of the homekeeping woman, and be a factor influencing her to turn her labor to gainful employment. The higher her wage the greater advantage she or the family derive from her gainful work. During the past fifty years real wages have increased and so also has the gainful employment of married women.

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[1] *This Ugly Civilization,* p. 64.

[2] *Middletown,* p. 498.

[3] *The Useful Art of Economics,* p. 121.

For customary household production to continue, families must, at times, have sources of money income other than the husbands' or fathers' earnings. These are frequently cut off by accident, sickness, unemployment, and death. During periods of unemployment the wife is often able to find work while her husband cannot. Although the husband, in the wife's absence, usually carries on some household tasks, the quantity and quality of household production often decline. Unemployment insurance, adequate widow's pensions, provision for the family in case of non-support will make it possible in many homes for household production to continue at its customary level.

A decrease in real wages in cities forces the woman into gainful work and thus tends to decrease household production. A decrease in farm prices and farm income, however, increases the production which the farm family carries on for itself. Since 1929 farm families have attempted to reduce expenditures by using home products as much as possible. Wool sheared from sheep has been scoured and carded for comforters, canning and preserving have increased, butchering and curing of meat have, in many places, been revived.

One of the major reasons advanced by Borsodi for increased household production is that the family would thus become more self-sufficing, and have greater economic security. He considers: "Only those who are insensitive to the spiritual outrage of a life of insecurity, of inexpressive work, and of subservience to modern business can be comfortable through conformity to the earn-and-buy economy of today." He contends: "*Economically we must be dependent upon no one but ourselves and those of our own household.* For to the degree in which we are dependent economically upon others, to that degree we cease to live as we would like to live."[4] He considers that even though such a method brings no economic gain it may yet be an advantage to those who wish to think and act independently since it gives them control over their means of livelihood. In rural communities the family can, by household production, attain a considerable measure of economic independence; but it is impossible to guess the extent to which this economic security is treasured when a comparison is being made with other occupations.

The desire for greater economic security may be responsible for the marked "back to the land" movement which began in 1930. The greater the insecurity in specialized work the more families will seek to provide for themselves. Perhaps sometime in the future, economic planning may effectively eliminate or reduce greatly the recurrent fluctuations in employment and families will not have to seek farms in order to provide even a minimum of security.

The shorter hours of full-time gainful employment, being urged by many at the present time, would in certain ways tend to increase total household production. It might, however, have the opposite effect in those households where the shorter hours permitted the woman to combine gainful employment with her remaining household tasks. But the members of the family in the time freed from gainful employment would probably carry on some tasks which would otherwise have been delegated or not performed. An elaboration of certain present tasks would probably occur; homes might be made more attractive and children better cared for. Moreover, certain handicrafts might be revived somewhat, at least to the extent of providing means of expression and an outlet for the craft interest of the worker. This interest has been stifled by the present minute division of labor.

Education—home economics education in particular—in some ways promotes increased household production. It aims to develop, for example, a greater appreciation of beauty in the home, "higher" standards of cleanliness, nutrition, and child care. High standards in these depend to a considerable extent on family labor. In addition to promoting higher standards and pointing out to families the things which they might do themselves, home economics education trains the household manager to utilize money and labor to greater advantage, and it gives training in the skills required for the performance of certain tasks: for example, food preparation, clothing construction, and child care. When workers are able to carry on a task with a greater degree of efficiency the task is more likely to have a place in household production. The present attention being given to child care and training is developing a greater appreciation of the social contribution of homemakers. By raising the social status of household production, the satisfaction which many women derive from household tasks will thereby be increased, and some women may be more willing to give full time to household tasks.

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[4] *This Ugly Civilization,* p. 401.

FACTORS PROMOTING FURTHER DECLINE OF HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION

In contrast with the factors opposing the decline of household production or even furthering its increase, there are many factors promoting further transfer of tasks, and causing household production to become even less important.

Custom and tradition were considered among those factors opposing further transfer of household tasks. But current mores are becoming more and more colored by the "earn-and-buy" theory of living. Some groups, in place of maintaining that "woman's place is in the home," contend that the woman should do her share in the support of the family. In fact, many consider that she is doing her share only when she is carrying on some gainful work. The gainful employment of married women, at least when there are no small children to care for, is, among some groups, the customary thing. Custom and convention are coming to be dominated by the idea that commercial production is the more efficient way of providing more of the goods which we use. This idea often blinds people to the possibilities of that production which they might carry on for themselves. So we pass from the entanglements of one custom to those of another.

Custom is a powerful force determining what goods and services families consider essential. Many families like the standard of living made possible by having the wife and mother free to serve the family in various ways. There are those who believe, however, that such an attitude is due more to custom than to any basic contribution that the woman makes to family welfare which could not, in many cases, be rendered more economically by a paid worker. If this is true we may in time expect to find a weakening of the strength of old custom. In many families it is no longer customary to demand homemade bread; meals eaten outside the home are on the increase; smaller living quarters, simpler furnishings, less elaborate meals are more general.

Every year new goods appear which make further demands on the money income. As market goods replace those formerly produced at home and as new goods are introduced, greater pressure on money income occurs. In describing Middletown's method of providing the family with clothing, the Lynds write: "Since the nineties it has tended to be less a hand-skill activity of the wife in the home and more a part of the husband's money-earning."[5] They found "new and urgent occasions for spending money in every sector of life."[6] "Job-holding," Borsodi believes, "still seems to most women an undesirable alternative to home-making, but many have now come to recognize it as an unavoidable one."[7] The desire for greater purchasing power often forces the woman to reduce her leisure, increase the efficiency of her performance of household tasks, simplify the standard of goods produced at home, seek means of delegating tasks, and reorganize the remaining tasks so that they will admit of gainful employment.

Commercial advertising is a potent force affecting the standard of living. It increases the relative importance of market goods, and lessens the importance of certain goods produced by the members. Even when it is possible to produce a good of relatively high quality at home, advertising often builds up an abnormal appreciation of the market product so that the merits of household production are overlooked. And once it has become customary to purchase the good rather than to make it, the purchase tends to continue, because habitual modes of thinking are established, and loss of skill and knowledge of method occurs when the task is discontinued.

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[5] *Op. cit.,* p. 164.
[6] *Ibid.,* p. 83.
[7] *Ibid.,* p. 175.

Further improvements in manufacturing and distribution are likely to occur which will increase the relative economy of commercial production of certain goods. One finds, for example, an increasing quantity and variety of bakery products in the market. This is due in a large measure to standardization of products, improved methods of packaging, and motor-truck transportation, which make economical the distribution of fresh supplies to even the retail stores in small villages. Perhaps with an advance in the science of large-scale cookery and the discovery of the art of "home-cooked flavors" people will be less reluctant to exchange dining at home for dining in the restaurant or cafeteria.

If it were easier for a woman to find gainful work, household production would decline. This will happen only when more part-time jobs are available. Never have they been plentiful. Prior to the recent increase in unemployment, serious attempts were being made in some places to increase them.

For household production to decline, jobs combining well with remaining household tasks not only must exist but also must be available to married women. In some cases administrative rulings or policies limit their employment. For example, a recent questionnaire sent out by the National Educational Association to 1,532 cities of over 2,500 population, brought replies showing that in 60.1 per cent of the schools a discrimination was made against married women, when new teachers were being employed. Where single women already in the school systems marry, they must in 25.1 per cent of the cities resign immediately, and in 25.5 per cent, at the end of the school year.[8] The removal of some restrictions on the part of school boards or private businesses or other agencies employing workers would make it easier for the homekeeping woman to turn her labor to what appears to her its most advantageous use. It was found that objections against married women in part-time employment seldom arise. The employer looking for a part-time worker may anticipate hiring a married woman since few other workers seek part-time jobs. His prejudice against hiring them for part-time work may be less than for full-time work. Part-time work is often routine in character, so labor turnover is not especially important. Moreover, employers with a paternalistic attitude, those concerned about "the neglected homes and children" of working wives and mothers, are not likely to object to married women in part-time work.

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[8] *Annals,* CXLIII (1929), 261.

Combining household tasks and gainful work depends to some extent on the husband's willingness to co-operate in household tasks. In spite of the strength of custom in Middletown it was found: "In the growing number of working class families in which the wife helps earn the family living, the husband is beginning to share directly in housework."[9]

Higher education of women is another factor tending to reduce household production and to promote a further transfer of customary household tasks to paid workers. Woodhouse considers:

> The present day college woman with her wide interests, her desire to continue her professional work after marriage, her refusal to be bound down by the cares of the traditional household, will, once she is given the right impetus, reform the present day household. Her experiments in improved conditions of household operation will have to be modified and adapted to the lower incomes of the industrial groups.[10]

It is easy to overestimate the importance of this factor. Not all college women feel a professional urge, nor are they all adverse to assuming the traditional rôle of homemaker. There is, no doubt, a small and perhaps an increasing proportion who wish to continue professional careers. New ways of combining gainful work with household tasks will be worked out by those who are sufficiently motivated to venture outside the customary ways of meeting life situations. And perhaps college women, since they are the most articulate group, will do more than any other toward helping women to make a satisfactory adjustment.

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[9] *Middletown,* p. 167.

[10] "Women in Industry, the Family and the Home," *op. cit.,* p. 296.

Practical findings from such institutions as the Institute for the Coordination of Women's Interests may also render assistance.

CHILD CARE AND TRAINING THE KEY TASK

Child care is the key task determining the future of household production. At present few substitutes are available for care in the home during the preschool period. Consequently children must be cared for at home, and other tasks which could be performed at a low cost by specialized agencies are added because they can be combined with child care. The decline in birth-rate is, however, reducing the importance of child care. On the other hand, increased knowledge of child development is making it more important. The nursery school is the only institution which during preschool years provides care and training at all comparable to that in homes. Its further development depends on the quality of care provided and its relative cost.

Nursery schools are still too new and knowledge of psychology too limited for scientific conclusions concerning the advantage of nursery schools in contrast with homes. Those who feel that the nursery school offers definite advantages point to children who grow more than the expected rate for their ages, to the accelerated progress as a result of nursery school experience, to the ignorance of parents concerning child needs. They point also to the neglect of the child in homes where the mother is overworked and to the excessive attention it receives if other tasks are limited. The continued presence of the young child in the home may lead to an unwholesome emotional attachment between mother and child. Hinkle believes that the nursery school will give the child a release from the emotional intensity of parents, and an opportunity to gain in a freer and more genuinely socialized atmosphere.[11] The nursery school also offers the advantage of an environment specially suited to the child.

The advantage of the nursery school becomes greater as living conditions restrict further the freedom of children. Its advantage also increases as birth-rate falls and fewer children have playmates at home near their own age. As tasks have left the home, educational possibilities have diminished. The increase in scientific knowledge has also tended to render customary practice obsolete, and thus to give the specialized worker a greater advantage over the mother in the home.

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[11] "New Relations of Men and Women as Family Members," *Concerning Parents*, p. 22.

The home, however, has certain advantages over the nursery school. Snedden is of the opinion that those who promote the nursery school movement "overvalue purposive enrichments and stimulations of various forms of child growth as constantly to run the risk of surrounding the very plastic child with the equivalents of green-house conditions";[12] and that under home care there is a "gradual growth and ripening of childish powers, and especially those of social, intellectual, and emotional kinds."[13]

At the present time, nursery school care and training are available to only a limited group, so small in fact as to have virtually no effect on household tasks as a whole, or on the gainful employment of married women. At the end of 1929 there were 149 nursery schools reporting 3,000 children.[14] Woolley, director of the Institute for Child Welfare Research of Teachers College, has, however, expressed the conviction that the nursery school must in time be made available to all children.[15]

The nursery school is likely to become more important, but will it become available to all income groups, rich and poor alike? This will probably occur only if nursery schools are financed wholly or in part by the state and made free or almost free to all. Without this a few nursery schools will be supported by philanthropy and endowments for research. Beyond these, families which use the services must pay the costs. In such cases nursery schools will probably be limited to high-income and upper middle-class families. Only in high-income families will the cost of nursery school care be a matter of little importance. If the cost is to be met by the medium-income family, the woman in most cases must contribute to the money income or other expenditures must be greatly reduced. It is probable that the earnings of the mother in lower-income groups are seldom adequate to pay for the costs of really good nursery school care. This may be true even if the mother felt she could turn all her earnings to this purpose.

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[12] "Shall We Keep the Children Out of School," *New Republic,* 61 (1929, Dec.), 40.

[13] *Ibid.,* p. 41.

[14] A. Gesell, "A Decade of Progress in Mental Hygiene of the Preschool Child," *Annals Am. Acad.,* 151 (1930, Sept.), 146.

[15] A. Roller, "Nursery Schools and the N.E.A.," *Survey,* 62 (1929, April), 121.

The high cost of institutional child care and training for preschool years is due to the fact that mass production is not satisfactory. Attention must be given to the needs of each individual child. Consequently nursery-school care holds little possibility over the home for reducing cost. To make it feasible for society as a whole it must be accompanied by a marked increase in the gainful employment of married women.

The nursery school does not at the present time completely free the mother for gainful work. Children are usually not admitted before the end of their second year. If there are several children in the family, child care may cause such a serious break in gainful employment as to make the woman continue for many years with homemaking as her main occupation. Other household tasks which it may be economical for the housewife to carry on may make it desirable for her to remain at home even though she is relieved of child care during certain hours by the nursery school. Furthermore, children usually attend nursery school only three to five hours a day, five days in the week, and the school assumes no responsibility for emergencies. Only in some instances are nursery-school hours planned to coincide with hours of gainful employment. Nursery schools in Detroit organized under the department of public welfare are, for example, open six days in the week from seven in the morning until six at night so that mothers can go to and from their places of work while the children are in nursery school. In such cases only the care of younger children and responsibility for emergencies will devolve upon the home.

Not only the care of preschool children but also the after-school, holiday, and vacation care of older children is largely left to the home.

In developing the nursery school and other agencies supplementing home care and training, attention has been focused on improving the care and training of children with little thought of releasing the mother in order that she use her time to greater advantage. If more tasks were commercialized the need for utilizing more fully the labor of homekeeping women would become more urgent and greater attention would doubtless be given to this.

In the meantime it seems likely that institutions to which child care and training can still further be delegated will develop slowly. But no general exodus of mothers from the home into gainful employment is to be expected, nor will a relinquishing of other household tasks occur until the institutions for preschool and school children more completely free the mother from present responsibility.

CHILD CARE AND THE GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN IN RUSSIA

Russia is furnishing us with an interesting example of an attempt to break away from traditional methods of housekeeping. The state is the aggressor in urging women to become gainful workers. Every type of occupation is open to women, married and single alike. Nurseries and kindergartens have been established, many of them being connected with factories. Three-month-old infants are admitted, nursing mothers being allowed time to feed their babies. Community kitchens, dining-halls, and laundries have also reduced necessary household tasks. This policy is part of the program of raising the standard of living and increasing the equality of individuals. Customs and traditions, standards of living, and stage of industrial development in Russia and America are very different. Thoughtful people, however, cannot help following the experiment with a great deal of interest and contrasting what appears to them the rapid, almost violent, changes in Russia with the gradual modification of our economic life.

IS THE TREND TOWARD GREATER SPECIALIZATION?

It is impossible to weigh the various factors influencing the relative importance of household production in the future. Those which can be quantitatively measured—for example, urbanization, gainful employment of married women, the volume of food production for the market—all point to a further decline. And it will probably occur. But how far will it go? The recent increase in rural population some people feel is indicative of a reactionary tendency. At the present time, one would hesitate to look upon this as more than temporary.

The development of our economic system points to further specialization. Müller-Lyer considers that increasing gainful employment of women is largely inevitable. He believes that division of labor among women is a direct continuation and completion of the evolutionary trend of human progress for thousands of years. He says: "The great law of all labour organization is co-operation . . . there is no doubt whatever that an epoch in which not only men, but also women, perform differentiated work, presents a higher stage of labour organization than another in which only the male half of the community is differentiated." He goes on to point out that only "under the pressure of social conditions do women specialize. . . . But circumstances are stronger than men; it is just in the great social movements that we are most clearly aware of the iron sway of inexorable sociological laws which, heedless of the wishes of individuals, govern development and continually transform society."[16] To permit women to become specialized workers to the same extent as men the joint co-operative household must be developed. The rise of this seems to be very far in the future. "Slowness," Müller-Lyer considers, "is not to be wondered at, for a fully developed female differentiation, as its opponents and partisans agree, is inconceivable without a thorough transformation of the whole of our culture."[17]

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[16] *History of Social Development,* pp. 226-7.

[17] *Ibid.,* p. 231.

CHAPTER XXII

SOCIAL POLICY AND THE PRIVATE HOUSEHOLD

The economic changes which have brought about a decline in the self-sufficiency of the family have occurred without much conscious social guidance. Families have changed their mode of production without being aware of the far-reaching effects the change might have on family life and the happiness of individual members. Since changes have been largely left to individual initiative it may be that the pendulum has swung too far; perhaps families have relinquished to too great an extent a form of production which contributed directly to a worthwhile standard of living and also tended to increase their economic security and strengthen family bonds. On the other hand, it may be that the change in family production is fully in accord with other important economic changes, e.g., increased specialization and mass production. Difficulties experienced may be due to the fact that customs and institutions have failed to change along with changes in the family system. Or new customs have failed to develop in order that the changed family can function effectively.

It is time to take stock of the facts pertaining to the economic life of the family and to formulate sound social policies concerning the economic rôle of women and the place of household production in our economic system. It is necessary to consider whether it is desirable that household production decline still further and the family more and more gain its livelihood through the earning of money income and the purchase of market goods; or whether we need a reversal of the present trend.

In deciding these questions social and cultural as well as economic benefits to families and individuals should be examined. Since we are in a process of change the difference between short-run and long-run effects is likely to be very important. The friction due to change itself may make many feel that present tendencies are very undesirable; it may blind them to later benefits which are likely to exist when the process of change has gone still further. In considering possible policies one must not be discouraged to find that whatever course is chosen difficulties and benefits are combined.

SHOULD HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION BE RE-EVALUATED?

It may be that we have been so anxious to share in the new goods made possible by mass production that we have been carried forward on a great wave of change which has swept tasks and workers out of the home and we have forgotten or overlooked the possibilities of small-scale production carried on in direct response to individual needs. We need to stop, examine our new economic system, and see clearly just what goods can best be produced by the family. Educational programs should help families discover the possibilities of present-day household production not only in contributing to family livelihood but also as an educational medium for children and as a means of satisfying the "instinct of workmanship" which has in so many cases been denied expression in our highly specialized, mechanized industry. Great care must be taken that such education is based on fact, not sentiment, with a full recognition of the money income necessary to supplement the kind of household production being advocated.

A true appraisal of household production may result in the discovery that it is much more important to society than is often supposed. Dissatisfaction with housekeeping and homemaking as an occupation will be reduced if women are no longer made to feel that they are forced to accept an inferior rôle. It may be that we have been so absorbed in a money economy that the importance of woman's work in the home has been undervalued, so that she feels driven to gainful work in order to do her share. In attempting to evaluate the importance of household production, wishful thinking for the purpose of persuading women to conform to custom is of little avail. Women on the whole are much too realistic in their thinking for such a method to be effective.

Should household production continue to be rated as a job anyone can do, for which no training is required, which is relatively unimportant in contrast with gainful employment, more and more women will rebel against accepting it as an occupation.[1] A true appraisal of household production may make it possible to escape the situation pointed out by Adler. He says:

> If boys are preferred to girls, if their rôle is taken to be superior, it is natural for girls to dislike their future tasks. No one can be content with a subordinate position. When such girls marry and face the prospect of having children of their own, in one way or another they show their resistance. They are not willing and prepared to have children . . . they do not feel it is a creative and interesting activity. . . . Housekeeping and home-making are too often regarded, not as contributions open to women, but as drudgery relegated to them. If a woman can really see housekeeping as an art in which she can be interested and through which she can lighten and enrich the lives of her fellows, she can make it a task equal to any other in the world.[2]

SHOULD HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION BE INCREASED?

Increased household production is an advantage if certain things now being purchased can better be provided by the family or if new lines of production can be advantageously carried on. It may also be desirable if it increases the economic security of families and individuals, strengthens family ties, or affords worthwhile recreational opportunities.

In regard to the latter it would seem that an increase in household production is likely to contribute to family stability only if it is economically sound. It has already been pointed out in Chapter XX that family instability may be due to a cultural lag of customs and sentiments behind material changes. What is needed is not to re-establish old practices and family patterns but to evolve new customs, attitudes, and sentiments more fully in accord with change. To an increasing extent educational programs for bettering family relationships are taking this view. New leisure-time interests in which the whole family shares may need to be emphasized.

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[1] It is of interest to note that in Zürich, Switzerland, each girl must visit the compulsory home economics continuation school. If girls do not come the parents have to pay a fine. Only girls frail in mind or body are excused. The program of studies includes mending, cooking, housework, household problems, and household arithmetic. (*Organisation und Lehrplan für die obligatorische hauswirtschaftliche Fortbildungsschule des Kantons Zürich,* Vom. 1., März, 1932.)

[2] *What Life Should Mean to You,* Boston (1931), p. 121.

Those promoting so-called subsistence homesteads are concerned with establishing better living conditions. In addition they wish to increase economic security by having families do more for themselves. The subsistence or garden homestead is to consist of one to five acres.

> On this plot the family will be expected to raise vegetables and fruit and depending on the circumstances, poultry and possibly a pig or two; in some cases a cow will be kept. Production will be on a subsistence basis for the household use of the family and not for sale in the market. The homestead, in other words, is intended to be a supplement to work in office and factory. . . . Home processing and storage of food will be encouraged. Home and small local industries will be fostered to aid in supplying clothing and other necessities and to develop sources of supplementary cash income.[3]

Present policy is that these garden homesteads be established near industrial centers. They are to be a part of the plan for rehabilitating certain occupational groups: (1) workers not likely to find employment even when industry improves, e.g., those in the soft coal industry; (2) farm families on poor lands which are to be taken out of cultivation. Garden homesteads are also to be established in reclamation areas, e.g., the Tennessee valley; and they are expected to help solve the old-age problem.

Those promoting the scheme write:

> A subsistence homestead, combined with wage employment—some form of which, at least on a part-time basis, undoubtedly can be secured upon the return to normal conditions—should enable these workers to become self-sustaining. For the younger worker, a garden home, acquired during his active years in industry, offers the prospect of a place to which to retire when the period of maximum earning power has passed.[4]

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[3] U. S. Dept. of Interior Division of Subsistence Homesteads, Circular 1. *General Information concerning the Purposes and Policies of the Division of Subsistence Homesteads* (1933), p. 8.

[4] *Ibid.,* p. 3.

In the midst of this effort to increase economic security through greater family production other ways of increasing it should not be overlooked. Unemployment insurance and widows' and old-age pensions should be more widely established. As the advantages of mass production have increased, and families to a large extent relinquished their economic independence and merged their fate with society as a whole, social responsibilities have appeared which perhaps have not been recognized because they are so new. It would appear that increased household production has some possibilities, but it is not the only and perhaps not the best means of re-establishing the economic security of the family.

SHOULD MARRIED WOMEN BE ENCOURAGED TO COMBINE GAINFUL WORK WITH HOUSEHOLD TASKS?

The increase in the proportion of married women in gainful work has been steady. It has occurred in spite of custom, prejudice, and, in some cases, regulations making it necessary for the women to relinquish gainful work immediately after marriage. Should custom, prejudice, and regulations opposing the entrance of women into gainful work be strengthened, or should a systematic attempt be made to remove them or diminish their importance so that married women may more freely combine gainful work with those household tasks best performed by the family?

Russia at the present time is making a great effort to draw married women out of the home into gainful employment. The heroic attempt to raise the standard of living is one reason for this policy. In order to do so all labor must be turned to its most productive use; and Russian leaders believe that the woman's labor is more productive in a specialized occupation than in the home. This may be true in Russia without being true here, for that country lacks the abundance of essentials that our system can produce with little or no assistance from married women. We can afford to turn more of our labor to the luxuries and comforts which perhaps can best be provided by a member of the family.

It is safe to predict that a campaign to interest married women in gainful work is not imminent. Unemployment has been widespread; the labor of millions of workers has been wasted; and in the midst of poverty there is talk of overproduction. Until a better adjustment occurs between production for the market and consumption, it might be well for society to hold back from gainful employment any additional labor supply.

A policy which in theory views society as one group overlooks the fact that we are organized on a family basis. If social income were distributed on the basis of need then we might say that with our present production capacity there would be little or no economic reason for the wife's seeking gainful work. Distribution of money income is, however, very unequal.

The strongest argument for increased freedom of married women to enter gainful work is that it makes it possible for certain families to use the labor of their members to greater advantage, thereby improving the family standard of living. Reasons for doing gainful work given by nine out of ten of the married women interviewed by the Women's Bureau reveals the family point of view. Women worked because of the husband's low wages, his unemployment, illness, or incapacity to raise the family standard of living to a health and decency level, to give the children a better education, to buy a home or better household equipment, to pay doctors' or hospital bills, to support elderly parents or other relatives, to save for a rainy day.[5]

Some people object to the entrance of married women into gainful work, claiming that one family may gain thereby but only at the expense of other families and individual workers. As well say to college students who earn, "If you don't work your parents will be better able to pay your expense." Those who argue thus see the influx of women into gainful employment chiefly as an addition to the labor supply which takes jobs away from other workers and depresses wage rates. They fail to see that labor turned to more productive uses increases the net product of society and tends to bring about a higher standard of living. It seems only a matter of common justice that one group should have as much right as another to use its labor to the greatest advantage. Men and unmarried women have no monopoly on the jobs available. Many tasks have passed from the home. These were a part of the customary work of married women. So it is scarcely true that she is taking a job away from someone else. Is she not merely carrying on the same production under slightly different circumstances?

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[5] Mary Anderson, "The Economic Status of Homemakers," *J. H. Ec.*, 24 (1932, Oct.), 867.

Objections to married women are often made on the ground that they are willing to work for much less than other workers and hence depress wage rates greatly. Their willingness to accept a rate lower than other workers is caused to some extent by the fact that they are often only temporary workers, and further that they are handicapped by their immobility and by present prejudices and restrictions. There is no reason to suppose that married women do not as other workers seek the best wages they can get. What should be done is to help them to get higher wages. To date the tendency has been to try to prevent their entrance rather than to work out a constructive program which recognizes their increased need for gainful work.

At times regulations are passed forbidding the employment of married women. The reason most frequently given is that jobs should go to those who need them, it being assumed that husbands can earn necessary family income. Our concept of need on the whole is very vague. In the judgment of the family, at least, the husband's earnings are not in all cases adequate.

On the whole, the question of need has been so overlooked in our economic system not only in distribution but also in production and consumption that it seems somewhat out of place that it should be emphasized so strongly in the matter of gainful employment of married women. People use it without realizing how inconsistent it is in contrast with other practices. If jobs, and with them income, should go to those who need the most, why not refuse employment to all daughters and sons whose fathers can support them or all those with independent incomes. In fact, if people are really anxious and disturbed because they feel that a family in which the wife is working gets too great a share of society's goods why not prevent it and, at the same time, work consistently for a reduction in the great inequality of incomes which is a major characteristic of our economic system. Why should one feel that the addition which the wife makes to the family income results in an injustice, in an unfair distribution of income, when the inequalities of income due to other causes are so much greater, so much further removed from any principle of need. It seems better to have production carried on by those who can perform it most efficiently and plan for distribution on the basis of need in some other way.

During a depression more than at any other time complaint is made about married women doing gainful work. At this time, in addition to regular gainful workers there are those who seek paid work because their husbands are unemployed, or because for some other reason income is unusually low. They, being only temporary workers and having no customary wage rate to which they cling, are usually willing to take anything that they can get. Their entrance is likely to be greatly resented by regular workers. During a depression increased attention should, undoubtedly, be given to the principle of need. But it should be remembered that the need for wages earned by the married woman may be equal or greater than that of many other workers who have independent incomes or family members to whom they can turn for support.

In spite of our rising standard of living and of the fact that wives are working outside the home, most families still feel that they have no more than enough for a minimum standard. Advertising is partly responsible. Furthermore, when a married woman earns her family secures goods which could not otherwise be afforded. Other women viewing these benefits also feel pressure to work because the minimum acceptable standard has risen, at least with respect to goods which must be purchased.

Gain or loss which can be measured in money is only one of the things to be considered. Some people feel that important household tasks are likely to be neglected when the mother goes out to work. Anxiety concerning child care is most frequently expressed. Neglect of children in order to contribute to money income may be due to ignorance of consequences or to the very great need for better food, housing, and other goods. If it is due to ignorance, more widespread knowledge of child care is needed; if due to economic pressure, a more effective method of supplementing low income may be required in order to permit mothers to remain at home: for example, the family wage or allowance advocated by Douglas. At the present time, even though some children are neglected when the mother goes out of the home to work, society cannot forbid such action without at the same time aiding more directly in maintaining at least a health and decency standard. Hughes, after her study of mothers in industry in Philadelphia in 1918, concluded: "The exclusion of the mothers from industry is not the solution of the family's problem. If she does not work the family cannot support itself." She goes on to say: "The effects of wage-earning, as practiced by these mothers, do not warrant interference with their activities."[6]

The gainful employment of married women is considered by some to be partly responsible for the falling birth-rate. At the present time gainful employment does interfere somewhat with child-bearing. But is this necessarily so? The undesirable effect of gainful employment on child-bearing may be due to the failure to recognize the presence of married women in industry and establish maternity insurance and make suitable provision for young children in those cases where the mother feels she can make her best contribution to the family income through gainful work. Such changes might increase the birth-rate. Women would not then feel that child-bearing interfered with their contribution to family livelihood. The policy recently adopted at Barnard College of granting "maternity leaves" with pay to women teachers may be indication of a new point of view in this country.

One further fact should influence us in deciding whether married women should be given more freedom in entering gainful work, that is, the dissatisfaction of some women with homemaking as a major occupation, and the personal benefits which might be derived from gainful work. Anything which makes homemaking more interesting may increase the proportion of those women who are content to continue in the customary rôle. Garden or subsistence homesteads may help to reduce dissatisfaction since the woman apart from gainful work will be able to do more for the family. Her unsought-for leisure will be reduced. "Killing time" would not be so great a problem.

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[6] *Mothers in Industry*, p. 19.

Greater freedom to choose might also reduce dissatisfaction. The sense of compulsion often leads both the woman and society to underrate the importance of her work. Increasing scientific knowledge does not support the idea that women are inferior. To continue such an attitude is to add fuel to fires already kindled.

The desire of some women especially those in the professions to continue their chosen occupation may be so strong as to prevent marriage and if they do marry they are likely to have few or no children. These women are, on the whole, a superior group and society probably loses considerably by their failure to bear children. If they give up their profession society may also be the loser.

On the whole, it seems desirable to free the family from hampering restrictions so that it may increase its income wherever possible. Any artificial protection given to other gainfully employed groups because of the entrance of married women into gainful employment should be established only temporarily. If present trends continue, such restriction becomes more and more unjust and greatly increases family hardship. Effort should also be made to develop part-time jobs for married women whose household tasks prevent them from becoming full-time gainful workers.

Improvement comes slowly, and in transition periods one may expect to find on the one hand the reactionary group who fear the disrupting influence of change and who cling to the past, and on the other the revolutionary group who are ready to discard everything which savors of an earlier system. In both of these groups emotion rather than reason dominates opinions. Customs are valuable only in so far as they are in accord with present needs and prevent us from making rash changes. But change should not be feared. It may shake us out of old grooves where life was so fixed in habit that new experiences were no longer possible and may lead to fuller human experience. The improvement lies not in resistance to change, but in a better understanding of the nature of the changes which are taking place and in attempting to direct society along lines in harmony with the new situation. In directing change our eyes should be fixed on the welfare of families and individuals. Institutions are important only as they serve humanity.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

CHAPTER I

Questions

1. Explain clearly why the definition of production as the creation of utility cannot be used without modification in defining household production.
2. Nearing says: "Within a century women have evolved from producers into spenders." Write a detailed criticism of this statement.
3. Explain as fully as you can why there is so much confusion concerning what is meant by household production.
4. List several different types of activity carried on by one member of the family and contributing to the satisfaction of other members which you do not feel should be looked upon as production. Give reasons for including each of these activities in your list.
5. Discuss Devine's opinion concerning the economic function of women.

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CHAPTER II

Questions

1. At one time many people believed that a household economy was one of the stages in our economic development. What are some of the conditions of primitive life which may have led to the acceptance of this theory?
2. What are Malinowski's conclusions concerning the economic organization in primitive people?
3. What things in primitive society interfered with households' being self-sufficient? What is meant by a self-sufficing household?
4. What is the major contribution made by Mason in his book, *Woman's Share in Primitive Culture?*
5. What does *Hopi Girl* by Smith tell us about household production among American Indians?
6. For each society studied make a list of the factors most influential in determining the status of household production.
7. Using Earle's description of Colonial days, list the goods families sold

and also those tasks (1) which the families did for themselves, (2) which they paid a worker to do, (3) in which they co-operated with other families.

8. Select a society in which you consider household production was quite important. Describe the tools used and the standard of living attained.
9. Make a list of generalizations or general truths pertaining to the place of household production in the system of providing goods.
10. Make as complete a list as you can of the advantages to be gained from studying the economic history of the household.
11. In what way is a study of the history of household production different from a study of the history of women in various societies?

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CHAPTER III

Questions

1. Make a list of all sources of statistical data which throw light on changes which have taken, and are taking place, in household production. List agencies securing and publishing the data, the type of information given in each, and the frequency with which data are secured. Indicate whether sources are primary or secondary.
2. Using census data determine for your own state:

   (*a*) The percentage of women 15 years and over, engaged in gainful occupation in 1920 and 1930.

   (*b*) The percentage of married women 15 years and over engaged in gainful occupations in 1920 and 1930.

   (*c*) The average size of family in 1910, 1920, and 1930.

   (*d*) The number of children under 5 per 1,000 married women in 1920 and 1930.

   (*e*) The proportion of the population in 1910, 1920, and 1930 living (1) in urban, rural-farm, and rural non-farm communities; (2) in cities of 8,000 and over.

   (*f*) The proportion of families living in different types of dwelling.
3. In two separate columns list (1) changes which have occurred since the Industrial Revolution which have caused household production to decline, (2) those which have resulted in additions to household production.
4. Russia, at the present time, is being rapidly industrialized. From what you know of the Industrial Revolution in America what effect will this have on household production? Are there any influences at work in Russia which may make for a different situation there? If so what are they?
5. Describe the change taking place in the household in Japan, as presented by Beard. Point out the similarities and the differences in these changes and those brought about by the Industrial Revolution in America.
6. Make as complete a list as you can of both the good and the bad effects of the decline of household production since the Industrial Revolution.
7. Analyze the information given in the agricultural census concerning self-sufficing farms in your state. Contrast your state with some other state where the conditions are very different.

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CHAPTERS IV AND V

Questions

1. "The relative importance of household production can be judged by the number of women non-gainfully employed and not in school, in contrast with the number of workers gainfully employed." Discuss the objections which might be raised to this method of measuring the importance of household production.
2. List and comment on the important facts brought out in Table VIII.
3. Divide into groups, according to income, families with whose household life you are familiar. List the major differences occurring in household production which are considered to be due chiefly to differences in income. Are there any factors influencing income which may also be responsible for the quantity and quality of household production? If your family had a 100 per cent increase in income what changes in household production would occur? Explain the probable reason back of each change.
4. Divide families according to size and composition, and according to location of dwelling, farm village, town, city. Make a list of differences in household production due to these factors.
5. Two groups of families, one in a large city and the other in a typical farming community, are alike with regard to money income (money income on farm being taken to include value of family living provided by the farm), size and composition of family, type of house, and equipment. What differences in household production would probably occur? Account for these.

6. Select the Oregon, Washington, or Rhode Island report of the homemakers' use of time. Summarize the purpose of the study, methods used, group studied, data secured, principal ways in which data are analyzed. Discuss the special contribution made by the study, the representative character of the data, and the limitations of the study in answering important questions concerning household production.
7. Plan a study of the time spent in food preparation, serving and clearing away:

   (*a*) State clearly just what it is you wish to discover and why you consider such information to be important.

   (*b*) List the factors which influence time spent concerning which you would like to secure information. Number these in order of importance.

   (*c*) Prepare a schedule or questionnaire and other devices you would use.

   (*d*) Describe the channels or organizations which might be used in securing the data.
8. Do the same for child care; for clothing.

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CHAPTER VI

Questions

1. Describe the outstanding differences in the household production of families of your acquaintance which you would attribute to differences in standards of living. Evaluate the standard as high or low, as desirable or undesirable. What are the different bases of judgment?
2. Describe the household production of families where the desire to have time free for other things, e.g., leisure and community activities, has had an important effect on reducing time spent in household tasks.
3. Give instances where community customs and conventions exert pressure on families to carry on certain types of production.
4. Cite actual cases from your own experience where you would question the wisdom of the tasks performed or the high-quality standards which a family seems to consider essential. Justify your criticism.
5. Outline as fully as you can all the ways in which home economics education tends to affect household production.
6. Give examples from your own family experience where satisfactory substitutes for certain household tasks were not available at a price that would even be considered by the family. List as many reasons as you can why satisfactory substitutes were not available. What is the possibility of a change in the future?
7. Cite instances: (*a*) where loss of traditional skill is affecting household production; (*b*) where tasks are carried on merely because the family happens to possess the necessary tools.
8. Summarize briefly the opinion expressed by Davenport in his article,

"The New Domestic System." Evaluate his statements. What might have prevented the situation which he describes?

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CHAPTER VII

Questions

1. Select the farming community with which you are most familiar. List the kinds of farm work done by the married women. Indicate the relative importance of the different types of work. Are there any factors which might stimulate or prevent women in assisting in farm work?
2. How does this community compare with other farming communities with which you are familiar? Account for any differences.
3. What effect, if any, does the woman's sharing in farm work have on housekeeping standards? On the share of other members in family tasks? On buying in place of making?
4. How many women do you know who carry on regular gainful work away from the home? What effect does this have on household tasks? Food standards? Cleanliness and order of the home? Child care? Other things that might affect family welfare?
5. Point out the major limitations of Collier's study, *Marriage and Careers.*
6. List original sources providing information about the extent to which married women contribute to money income. Summarize briefly the information in each.

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CHAPTER VIII

Questions

1. "All household production is service production." Do you agree? Discuss.
2. What do you consider a satisfactory definition of necessaries of life? What production carried on by families of your acquaintance contributes to the necessaries of life? To comforts?
3. What are some of the consequences of the passing from the household of the production of necessaries? Give illustrations.
4. Read the suggested chapters in Slichter and list fully the advantages and disadvantages of large-scale specialized production; also the advantages and disadvantages of small-scale unspecialized production. In the light of these, appraise household production.

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CHAPTER IX

Questions

1. The housewife's labor is usually looked upon as an overhead cost of household production. Explain to what extent this is true.
2. How would labor costs be assigned if every task bore an equal share of overhead? "The household produces many goods which if all cost items were considered would be found unprofitable." Explain and discuss.
3. Draw up a plan for studying all the overhead cost of a major house task, home laundering, for example.
4. Give some examples of common household tasks which do not bear a full share of overhead expenses. Why are they carried on?
5. Explain what is meant by spreading overhead. How is the household different from business in this respect?
6. Evaluate the various methods of placing a money value on household production, pointing out the limitations of each.

7. Do you know of any households where a systematic attempt is made to estimate the value contributed by family production? Why is it done? What articles are evaluated? What method is used? Would this method be satisfactory for all goods produced or services rendered? Why do more households not do this?
8. Write a critical review of Harmaja's discussion of household production in Finland.

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CHAPTER X

Questions

1. List the similarities and differences of business enterprises and households. Discuss the significance of these differences.

CHAPTER XI

Questions

1. Evaluate the status of scientific management in households with which you are most familiar. What are the stimulating and limiting factors? For what task do you feel science is most fully used in reaching decisions?
2. Outline briefly what you consider to be the scientific approach to the following household problems: (*a*) Is it better to make or to buy a good? (*b*) What foods shall I include in this week's menus? (*c*) What cleaning tools should I have? (*d*) What method should I use in mixing this cake, or cleaning the floor? (*e*) What is the best way to arrange my kitchen? For which of these problems do you feel the management could actually be scientific? Give reasons.

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CHAPTER XII

Questions

1. How does real income differ from money income?
2. What are the various ways in which a shift of the wife's labor to gainful employment may affect the family's real income?
3. Under what conditions is it likely that gainful employment of the mother will bring the largest net gain to the real income?
4. What are the conditions under which it is most economical for the woman to remain a full-time worker? What statistical evidence could be presented to support your opinion?
5. List and briefly explain why so many women find that they can make their best contribution to the family by household production.
6. Appraise Pruette's thesis: "Women are enjoying unexampled leisure."
7. List as fully as you can outstanding difficulties met in studying leisure time of homemakers.
8. Give some examples to show how waste from a social and from an individual or family point of view may be very different.
9. How much truth is there in the belief that anticipation of marriage reduces the productive efficiency of young women?
10. Make a list of services customarily performed by the family which do not lend themselves to mass or centralized production. Explain why each item on your list does not pass to mass or centralized production.
11. You are acquainted with homekeeping women who have considerable leisure. List difficulties which they would encounter in using at least a part of this leisure for gainful work. Which of these difficulties are likely to be less important in the future? More important?

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CHAPTER XIII

Questions

1. Cite cases from your own experience of women who make outstanding contributions to their families through choice-making. In which of the four ways listed in the text was the contribution most important? Are all families similar in this respect? Do you know of cases where the husband is the one who directs consumption? What danger lies in one person's doing too much?
2. To what sources of help do you turn in your choice-making? How scientific are they? How helpful?
3. What advice would you give a woman who was attempting to improve her family's choices?
4. Criticize the five tests of a high standard of consumption set up by Kyrk (p. 394).

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CHAPTER XIV

Questions

1. Make a list of possible advantages and disadvantages which should be weighed in debating whether a homemaker should be gainfully employed.
2. In what groups would you expect the husband's pride and ambition to be most affected by his wife's gainful employment? Give reasons.
3. A woman earns more than her husband. Her place of earning makes it impossible for them to live together. Should she give up her larger salary and go with him to a place where the salary she could earn is much smaller or should he give up his position and accept a lower salary where she is? List fully the factors to be considered in weighing the pros and cons.
4. A housewife asks advice on whether the better flavor in home-canned

asparagus is enough to offset the time and labor involved. How would you advise her?

5. Make a cost analysis of laundry work done by a member of the family, by a hired worker in the home, or by a commercial laundry, which would serve as a basis for deciding how the laundry work ought to be done. Do the same for other tasks.
6. Criticize Mrs. Borsodi's estimates in "Women and Machines," as a guide for other women.
7. Here are two women. One can readily turn her spare time to gainful work; the other cannot. In what way is their problem of making versus buying different?
8. Income is distributed among individual members and between (1) goods for group and individual use, (2) the present and the future, (3) gifts and family use. Cite what you consider to be instances of failure to secure proper balance between these uses. Account for these. What do you consider are the most frequent mistakes? What might be done to improve the distribution?
9. Here is a family whose members say they have no choice in spending their income, that those things they have to have take every cent. How would you advise them?
10. What proportion of the families of your acquaintance make a yearly or a semi-yearly budget? Analyze in detail the reasons why some do and others do not.
11. List the conditions which make for successful budgeting. How frequently are these found among families of your acquaintance? Why are they not more frequent?
12. What system of control of money income is used among families you know? Discuss the difficulties involved. What arrangements would you suggest?
13. How would you explain the fact that so few people record personal or household expenditures?
14. List the questions which a housewife should have in mind in selecting a satisfactory account form.

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CHAPTER XV

Questions

1. Among families you know some women are much more successful than others in getting co-operation in the performance of household tasks. How would you explain the success of some and the failure of others? How does personnel management of the household differ from that of a business?
2. Should the husband do "his share" at home as a matter of course? How does the idea of the husband's share differ in the households you know? Account for the differences. Suggest general rules or principles for determining the share of each member of the family.
3. Explain Goldmark's method of studying fatigue. Of what significance are her findings to the housewife?
4. Suggest additional studies which would increase our knowledge of household fatigue.
5. Outline in some detail a comprehensive treatment of the subject, "Fatigue and housework."
6. What proportion of the housewives of your acquaintance make a weekly work plan? Why not more?
7. "It is probable that the desire to save money is greater in most households than the desire to save time and energy." What arguments might be raised to support or refute this thesis. Cite examples to bear out your points.
8. Draw up a questionnaire to be used in a study of homemakers' attitudes to household tasks. An effort should be made to discover what the attitudes are, how they differ from time to time and person to person, and also what factors affect attitude.

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CHAPTER XVI

Questions

1. Analyze the difficulties encountered in securing efficient household workers. Account for these difficulties.
2. What suggestions are made for increasing the supply of efficient help? Show clearly how each thing affects supply. Which of these are likely to influence future supply?
3. What changes in household employment do you expect to find occurring in the next fifty years? Give reasons.
4. "Domestic service is an ancient occupation; it smacks of feudalism rather than the machine age." Explain, using actual illustrations wherever possible.
5. Would an increase in paid labor in the home tend to raise or lower the general level of efficiency in the performance of tasks? Give reasons for your opinion.
6. For what tasks and under what conditions is a paid worker hired by families of your acquaintance? Under what circumstances would more be hired?

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CHAPTER XVII

Questions

1. List in order of importance the factors which influence you in selecting a store to patronize. Would the importance of these be the same for all women? Consider specific goods, e.g., groceries, hats, shoes, and a car.
2. In two parallel columns list the advantages and disadvantages to the buyer of different types of retail stores: department store versus specialized shops; chain versus independent food and drug stores; mail order versus department and specialty shops.
3. Enumerate the difficulties which household buyers encounter in comparing prices in different stores.
4. "When is a bargain not a bargain?" Discuss, drawing on your experience as much as possible.
5. Discuss the limitations of the following in selecting goods: (1) repute of the dealer, (2) brand, (3) advice of clerks, (4) advertisements. Use examples of different types of goods.
6. Name six different articles recently purchased. (Do not restrict yourself to foods.) What assurance did you have that you secured the quality you wanted or that you got the most for your money? What additional information would have been very helpful? Discuss the likelihood of such information being made available some time in the near future.
7. List the standards useful in market selection with which you are familiar. To what extent do you use them? What additional standards are being developed?
8. Why does the use of standards in retail selling develop so slowly?
9. Here are two refrigerators with performance ratings of A and B, with specified cubic capacity and shelf area. What else would you need to know before being able to judge which was the better buy?
10. Give examples from your experience of unreasonable demands of buyers which increase marketing costs. What would have been the response of these people if you had pointed out the effect of their demand?
11. Summarize the work of the American Home Economics committee on standardization of consumers' goods.

12. How far can you expect sellers to go in introducing standards to help household buyers? Give reasons. Why for example would sellers favor such standards as fancy, choice, and standard for canned fruits and vegetables rather than a simple rating such as A, B, C?
13. "The development and introduction of standards and the passage and enforcement of needed legislation depend upon the consumer." Outline a comprehensive development of this thesis.
14. Appraise the stores in your community according to the criteria of a good market set up by H. Kyrk in her book, *Economic Problems of the Family,* pp. 443-6.

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CHAPTER XVIII

Questions

1. Compare present household problems with those of a generation or two ago in regard to relative difficulty from the management point of view.
2. Richards, in her well-known book, *The Cost of Living*, says: "Just

as soon as the home is raised to its proper position and is recognized as a business, its director will be required to have knowledge and skill in some measure commensurate with the interests at stake" (p. 132). Discuss.

3. Analyze the contribution made by various college courses you have taken to the two phases (see text) of an educational program for greater efficiency in household management.
4. Make a list of objectives which would serve as the basis for planning a course in homemaking for men or boys. To what extent are new courses in the curriculum necessary to achieve these objectives?
5. Make a list of problems especially perplexing to the present-day housewife which you feel call for research. Discuss each.
6. Each year the Department of Agriculture publishes a list of research projects which have been completed or are in progress and which have been or are being carried on with funds provided by the Purnell Act. Study the reports of a couple of years. List the research bearing on household management problems. What problems are receiving most attention? Which are receiving least? How would you explain the type of problems selected?

CHAPTER XIX

Questions

1. Enumerate fully what you consider are the characteristics of an "ideal job." Contrast a job of the typical housewife with this ideal. Has homemaking as an occupation improved or not in the past fifty years? What has made it better or worse?
2. What things might be done to improve the status of household production for the standpoint of the worker?
3. What aspects of homemaking as a job do many women like which may not be good for them?
4. How widespread is discontent among housewives? Among what group does it occur? Is it due to a general sense of unrest in society, a desire for change in itself; or is it due to something more fundamental? What changes may be causing unrest to increase? To decrease?
5. Examine the census of occupations to discover what gainful occupations married women enter. Of what significance are these facts?
6. "The reluctance or readiness of workers to enter or abandon an occupation is a test of its attractiveness." Does this test apply to household production? Explain.
7. "Household tasks do not provide scope for a woman's innate ability any more than for a man's." Do you agree? Even if it is true is that any argument for women in general turning to gainful work? Discuss.

8. Pruette sees danger in the new leisure for women which they have neither earned nor been prepared for. What is this danger? How real is it? How might it be reduced?
9. Wadia says, "Real independence lies in a capacity to work; so long as a woman fills her duty to her home and society she is truly independent in the highest sense of the term." Can you infer from this that woman's place is in the home? How if she is an unpaid worker is she to achieve a sense of independence?
10. "The story of man's oppression of woman is confessed by all students of human history to be the blackest page of human slavery." Would you agree that modern women are being exploited? Discuss.
11. Pruette presents a two-fold thesis: (1) The tendency to activity is fundamental and may take useless, valuable, or dangerous forms. (2) Society, within certain limits set by instinctive and emotional patterns, has power to determine the form of activity which it desires from the individual and to enforce the acceptance of these forms. To what extent do these facts account for the kind of activities carried on in the home? The discontent of some women with household tasks? The nervous strain of some gainfully employed women?
12. Briefly state the main ideas advanced by Myerson in *The Nervous Housewife.* Discuss.
13. What solution has Mrs. Gilman to offer for the conflict of interests in the life of modern women?
14. "We may find that this whole idea of differentiation of social function following the sex division rests upon nothing more than our traditional system of sanctions and taboos." Discuss.
15. Give examples of women whose lives have been very cramped because of having confined their energies to household tasks and leisure. They did not live up to the personality promise that was evident when they were gainful workers. How account for this? Might the reverse also be true?

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CHAPTER XX

Questions

1. List as fully as you can changes which have occurred in the past hundred years which have tended to increase family instability. Show how these changes are interrelated.
2. Is the family better or worse off because of the changes which have occurred since the industrial revolution? List fully the factors which would have to be considered in answering this question.
3. "A wife is a luxury." Point out conditions under which this may or may not be true.
4. What are the conditions necessary for family success? To what extent does the gainful employment of the wife and mother contribute to these? Detract from them?
5. "Household tasks should be made to contribute as much as possible to family life." List the various ways in which this may be done.

6. Outline in detail a thorough treatment of the following subject, "Woman's place is in the home."
7. Explain what Chapin means by a cultural lag. Give three examples of what you believe are indications of cultural lag in the economic life of the family.
8. List and briefly describe the major functions of the family. What change has been occurring in these? Which functions do you feel are better performed by the family than by any other group?
9. Give suggestions for ways of increasing family unity and stability which are in accord with changed economic conditions. To what extent do families of your acquaintance utilize these?
10. "The socialization of family functions proceeds apace and the power and prestige of the family diminishes." Outline the topics you would expect to find treated in a comprehensive discussion of this theme.
11. What research topics suggested by Mowrer would throw light on the way in which the status of household production affects the family?

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CHAPTER XXI

Questions

1. List in parallel columns factors checking further decline in household production and those stimulating decline. Evaluate the importance of these factors giving reasons.
2. Describe briefly the changes occurring in household organization in Russia. What light do these throw on what may happen in the United States? In what respects are the two societies different?

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CHAPTER XXII

Questions

1. Discuss the relation of old-age pensions, widows' pensions, unemployment insurance, the family wage advocated by Douglas, to the change which has occurred in the direct production carried on by the household.
2. Describe briefly and explain the difference in social policy in Russia

and the United States with respect to the gainful employment of married women.

3. To what extent is the gainful employment of married women restricted? Discuss the desirability of restricting the gainful employment of married women.
4. Snedden says, "Society cannot expect or even permit non-domestic 'full-time' wage work when children are still young." How can it be prevented? Are any of the methods suggested likely to have undesirable consequences? Discuss.
5. Wadia says: "The influx of women into the industrial mart has tended to lower the general level of wages . . . their employment becomes a doubtful expedient from the economic standpoint." Discuss.
6. What are the major arguments for and against the public subsidy of nursery schools?
7. Evaluate Wembridge's suggestions as to steps to be taken to prepare women for their new economic rôle.
8. Find out all you can about subsistence or garden homesteads. How important do you think they will become?

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